THE TIMES

No. 66,410 THURSDAY JANUARY 14 1999 http://www.the-times.co.uk

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Books: MANDY, the life of Peter Mandelson, reviewed by JOHN GRIGG

'God sent grandchildren of pigs and monkeys to us...so we took them'

I wanted to kill more Britons, says terrorist



Daniel McGrory, left, and photographer Peter Nicholls watch the Yemen kidnap trial

LAUGHING at the memory of those who died, the leader of the terrorist group that kidnapped 16 western tourists boasted yesterday that his only regret was that he had not killed more of his hostages.

As he was dragged into court by dozens of armed police, Abu Hassan shouted: "I did everything in the name of God so I am sorry for nothing...I am very famous now, but let everyone know I only gave orders to kill the men, not the women."

When told that while he was revelling in his exploits, the funeral of one of his victims was taking place, Hassan shrugged his shoulders and said "That is not my problem." And asked if he felt any remorse for Margaret Whitehouse's husband, he spat on the floor and said: "He means nothing to me. If my pistol had not jammed he would be dead as well."

For the next 45 minutes this small, scruffy figure harangued the court, extolling his own prowess as a terrorist leader, occasionally lecturing people on the Koran and often reviling the holidaymakers who were killed and injured in his gunfight with Yemeni troops. They were "the grandchildren of pigs and monkeys", he said, adding "God sent them to us, so we took them".

Now, however, Hassan's life could be in the hands of those he left to grieve, for he could yet be spared execution if those he was mocking ask for mercy. Lawrence Whitehouse said yesterday that he would not ask for the death penalty, which he described as a barbaric punishment. "To execute him would turn him into a martyr and that would fuel his movement," he said. But when I asked Hassan if he wanted the bereaved families to plea for clemency, he waved his hands in a gesture of contempt and said: "I am ready to die for my beliefs. If I live I will kill some more."

And when the judge tried in vain to stop Hassan's ranting, he simply turned his back and said scornfully "If you want to finish this quickly and take me outside and shoot me, then go ahead. I don't care."

As a long list of charges were read out — including the training and arming of five Britons to carry out bombings in Aden on Christmas Day — Hassan tugged at his matted black beard and mumbled "Why bother with any of this." And when the names of the hostages were read out, with pauses after those who died, he did not bother to listen. He preferred to joke with the elder of the brothers alongside him in the dock, Ahmed Mohammed Ali Atif. The younger brother, 18-year-old Saad Mohammad Ali Atif, looked terrified as Hassan in yet another outburst lunged across the dock towards him saying: "He has no part in this. I am the leader, I gave the orders for the kidnapping and the bombings, I take full responsibility for the Islamic Army of Aden which I created."

Throughout yesterday's hearing at the Appeal Court in Zinjubar, 30 miles east of Aden, officials called Hassa by his real name, Zain Al Abdin Abu Bakar Al-Mehdar rather his preferred *nomme de guerre*. Asked his profession, he stood up straight for the only time and declared himself "a Mujahidin warrior working in the cause of God".

As the district attorney then read out warrants for eleven more kidnappers he said had escaped in the desert shoot-out on December 29, Hassan feigned suprise, claiming he had never heard of any of them. Ten minutes later he changed his mind, saying: "I hope those who are at large will continue the Jihad." Then, gazing around the packed courtroom, he added chillingly: "I hope God strikes you all."

Yemeni officials and Western diplomats are worried about terrorist reprisals to free Hassan and the five Britons held in Aden and they drafted in scores of armed police to surround the white-painted courthouse

Continued on page 2, col 5

John Brooke, the British oil worker kidnapped in Yemen, was on his way home to Norwich after a ransom deal with Yemeni tribesmen.

His wife, Katherine, spoke to him by telephone from Sana'a and said his first request was for the result of Saturday's Norwich City-Crewe Alexandra game ......Page 2



Abu Hassan is led into court, where he declared: "If you want to take me outside and shoot me, go ahead"

Brazil crisis jolts world markets

By Alasdair Murray, Economics Correspondent

INTERNATIONAL markets were thrown into turmoil yesterday after Brazil's decision to devalue its currency reawakened fears of a global economic crisis. Shares in London and other European markets suffered heavy losses while the dollar took a battering on the foreign exchanges.

The panic was triggered by the resignation of Gustavo Franco, chief of the Brazilian Central Bank, swiftly followed by the news that Brazil, the world's eighth largest economy, was relaxing its currency bands.

The market read the decision as an effective currency devaluation, sending the Brazilian currency, the real, sprawling on the foreign exchanges. Trading on the Brazilian stock market was briefly suspended after shares plunged 10 per cent. Other Latin American markets suffered sharp falls, with analysts warning of the dangers of a rerun of the crisis which engulfed Asia a year ago.

The crisis forced President Clinton to appeal to the Brazilian Government to continue with the tough reforms that have greatly reduced the country's inflation rate. Brazil accounts for about 20 per cent of all America's exports.

Britain announced it was in touch with other members of the G7 group of leading industrial countries. In London the FTSE 100 index of leading shares ended down 183.5 at 5850.1 — its fourth biggest point loss ever — although the market recovered from a loss of nearly 290 points earlier in the day.

Anatole Kaletsky, page 20
Volatile markets, page 25

Anwar lawyers change tack

Charges of corruption against Anwar Ibrahim, the ousted Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister who is on trial in Kuala Lumpur, were amended to shift their emphasis from sexual misconduct to abuse of power ....Pages 15, 21

Mugabe retreats

President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has been forced by the International Monetary Fund to retract proposals for the mass confiscation of white-owned farms..........Page 15

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Blair in secret trips to hospital bedsides

By Mark Inglefield, Political Reporter

THE Prime Minister, it seems, has taken on the mantle of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, by making secret trips to hospital bedsides.

Tony Blair yesterday disclosed how he made an unannounced evening visit to St Thomas's Hospital in Waterloo on Tuesday, spending an hour chatting with staff about the state of the NHS.

Indeed, a spokesman for No 10 confided, the excursion was far from the first made by Mr Blair to visit the needy and their carers in hospital.

Parallels with Diana are unavoidable: St Thomas's was even among the hospitals she visited on her own private excursions, in 1981 and 1991.

But, as with Diana, these missions of mercy can be misconstrued. So when Mr Blair disclosed his secret to millions of radio listeners yesterday morning some were inclined to raise a cynical eyebrow.

Downing Street insisted that Mr Blair's visit to St Thomas's was a common occurrence, which is why the press were not told. It was to be a private trip, accompanied by a few policemen and advisers, to assess the problems being confronted by doctors and nurses in the National Health Service.



"He's done wonders for spare beds, everybody's discharging themselves"

But yesterday morning, when asked about the NHS on Radio 5 Live, Mr Blair let slip his secret. "I went myself to a hospital last night and visited the accident and emergency department and talked to some of the nurses there," he said.

William Hague, the Opposition Leader, dubbed the Prime Minister "St Tony of Islington" when he mentioned the visit in the House of Commons yesterday. Mr Hague has, however, hastily arranged a tour of St Mary's hospital, in Paddington, today.

Mr Blair also came under attack from nursing unions after Downing Street said the Prime Minister did not think the NHS was in crisis.

Geoff Martin, head of London Health Emergency, a pressure group, said: "Tony Blair went to the wrong hospital. St Thomas's has a big casualty department, a lot of funds and hasn't been under much pressure over the past few weeks."

Santer threat may stop EU revolt

From Charles Bremner in Strasbourg

THE fate of Jacques Santer and his Brussels executive will be decided by the European parliament in censure votes today after the Commission President took some of the steam out of MEPs' anger by threatening to resign if any of his team were condemned by the assembly.

After a day of manoeuvering, the Commission seemed likely to survive the all-out censure vote over fraud and mismanagement, which could trigger its automatic dismissal.

However, a chain of threats and counter-threats by the political groups and Mr Santer could still lead the Commission to the political guillotine. This would happen if a majority of MEPs back demands for the sacking of two Commissioners, Edith Cresson of France and Manuel Marin of Spain, the pair deemed most responsible for malpractice in the Commission. However, amid the sound and fury of the Strasbourg Palace of Europe last night, it also appeared possible that the parliamentary onslaught against the Brussels executive would peter out with a whimper. This would be a humiliating retreat for the assembly that roared, just five months from its next elections. It would also be a big relief for the member governments, which have been aghast at the prospect of paralysis in the EU just as it embarks on long-term spending reforms.

The assembly's 214 Socialists, led by Pauline Green, a British Labour MEP, have refused to "pick off" individual commissioners, but want backing for new controls against fraud and *mis*management. Edward McMillan-Scott, leader of the British Tory group, who backs full censure, described this as Mrs Green's "dance of death" with Mr Santer and he predicted a majority against the individual Commissioners today.

Velvet touch fails, page 12

Hume denies he has contempt for Carey

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

BEHIND-THE-SCENES attempts to defuse a potential row between Britain's two main church leaders were under way last night after a claim that the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Basil Hume, is privately "contemptuous" of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey.

Cardinal Hume has written an impassioned letter to Dr Carey refuting the claim and pleading: "We must not let others drive wedges between us." He adds: "I am particularly sorry about this because I have always valued your friendship and kindness towards me." Dr Carey has reciprocated in kind.

The allegation will fuel speculation over the state of relationships between the two denominations in the wake of the defection of hundreds of Anglicans to Roman Catholicism after the ordination of women priests. The claim is made by the Tory MP Ann Widdecombe, a prominent lay Catholic, in a new book, *Basil Hume: By His Friends*, serialised in *The Times* from today. Ms Widdecombe, herself a convert, admits that no trace of any contempt for Dr Carey has been publicly discernible. But writing of the Cardinal, she says: "Those who know him say his attitude to George Carey verges on the contemptuous in private."

Ms Widdecombe is one of 24 people to contribute to the book, published by HarperCollins and edited by Carolyn Butler, who was, until recently, a press officer with the Catholic Media Office.

Ms Widdecombe says of the Cardinal: "He can be cross and crusty, gentle and endearing, tough and uncompromising, sensitive and diplomatic. He hates rows. Perhaps sometimes he hates them too much."

She says relationships between the denominations appear to have "weathered the storm" occasioned by the ordination of women priests.

Last night Cardinal Hume told *The Times*: "I have contempt for no person, least of all the Archbishop of Canterbury, for whom I have a warm regard and from whom I have received nothing but kindness and friendship."

Book extract, page 19

MPs resume the Questions farce with unaccustomed E's



IF YOU seek evidence of the chasm between MPs and youth culture, harken to an exchange yesterday between Barry Sheerman (Lab, Huddersfield) and Jack Cunningham, Britain's poshest Geordie (and Cabinet "Enforcer"). Referring to the Government's drugs strategy, Sheerman told Cunningham that "students could be targeted with E's". Or that's how it sounded. Whether Hansard records it as 'ease' or E's will tell us how streetwise their reporters are.

Early days, perhaps, for nominations for the Best/Worst/Silliest of 1999 Awards, but Prime Minister's Questions yesterday at Westminster (where Government backbenchers allowed by the whips to ask questions are now sitting together, probably for protection) produced some strong contenders.

This sketch's Best Heckle nomination goes to Dennis Skinner, who, after a spluttering denunciation of Government policy by Paddy Ashdown shouted "Sack 'im!" to the Prime Minister. Both the Labour and the Tory benches fell about. Ashdown tried to be rude to Blair about the NHS-patient's-eye view of this Government. "If you were a Labour voter . . ." he huffed, unwittingly reminding us of growing doubts on this question.

Blair seemed unfazed by Ashdown's rudeness. Now the two men sit together on a Joint Cabinet Committee, suspicion arises that the Liberal Democrat Leader may have penned a little note to Downing Street yesterday morning: "Dear Tony, I'll have to be a bit rough with you this afternoon. Please don't take this personally — I've got to keep the lads on-side. Your pal, Paddy."

"Dear Paddy, Message understood. And I may have to be a bit rough, in reply. My lads are restive too. Cheers — and no hard feelings. Tone."

Our Luckiest Escape nomination goes to Peter Mandelson, who wasn't even there. But William Hague's spirited try at stirring up the story of his resignation veered off-track yesterday. Faced with the choice of piling on the agony over the Health Service, and piling on the agony over Labour's internal feuding, the Tory Leader simply couldn't make up his mind. So he tried to raise both, feebly linked.

Ready for a massive frontal assault on either, Blair did choose. He avoided the Mandelson question, preferring to answer on the NHS. Hague's charge faltered amid a hail of statistics and counter-statistics about nurses.

Then a Tory, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown (Cotswold), resumed the Mandelson attack. But still Mandelson's luck held. Clifton-Brown had wrongly buttoned his double-breasted jacket and looked like a clown. His doubtless brilliant question sank in the hilarity.

The Flattest Joke nomination? To the Prime Minister, whose only response to Tory attacks on ministerial misconduct was a parboiled sneer at Michael Portillo. What really would upset him, he replied, would be if any ministers made a television programme about trains in Spain. As Portillo is not a minister, and Mandelson is rumoured to be planning a video-documentary of himself doing charity work in Tanzania, it was hard to see the point of this joke. Even poodles failed to laugh.

And finally to our Teacher's Pet nomination. To Hazel Blears (Lab, Salford), who is fast emerging as Mr Blair's Number One Little Ray of Sunshine. Yesterday the perky, petite and relentlessly blithe Mrs Blears shared with Mr Blair her sorrow that "tittle-tattle and gossip" about his Cabinet were all the media cared for, instead of "the important issues." She cited one of these: "old people and young, disaffected teenagers working together in gardening projects in Salford."

A relieved Blair turned away from tittle-tattle to embrace the significance of this.

Kidnap Briton flies home after ransom deal

FROM DANIEL MCGRORY IN ADEN AND STEPHEN FARRELL

JOHN BROOKE, the British oil worker kidnapped in Yemen, was on his way home last night after a secret ransom deal was agreed with tribesmen.

After holding the 46-year-old for five days, his captors handed him over to negotiators, including one sent by his American employer, Halliburton. Mr Brooke was flown by helicopter to the British Ambassador's residence in Sanaa, where he had a long telephone conversation with his wife, Katherine, who was at their farmhouse near Norwich.

Last night Mrs Brooke, 45, said she was very happy to learn that he was safe. Her husband's first request, she disclosed, was to be told the result of Norwich City's First Division match with Crewe Alexandra last Saturday. Mr Brooke's local team lost 3-2.

Mrs Brooke said: "He was wondering what the score was as he sat in captivity in the desert on Saturday. I couldn't remember because I was excited that he was released."

Mr Brooke, who has worked in Yemen for 12 years and escaped a previous kidnap attempt, told the Ambassador, Victor Henderson, that the



Brooke: was kidnapped by Yemeni tribesmen

was enormously relieved to have been freed, and described his kidnappers' treatment of him as "very generous and considerate". He said he had never been threatened.

Armed men forced their way inside the guarded compound in the province of Marib late on Saturday. Mr Brooke was initially worried because he thought he had been grabbed by Islamic terrorists in revenge for the arrest of five Britons accused of a bomb plot in Aden, but his captors reassured him that they had no links with Islamic extremists and said they wanted to swap him for one of their tribesmen who had been jailed for murder and sabotage.

Mr Brooke said he did not know what the deal was to free him, and usually in such cases the precise details are never known and there are seldom arrests. One diplomatic source said: "Everyone is so grateful to see a happy ending that no one asks too many questions."

Mr Brooke, who is to arrive back in Britain today, told British officials that, after grabbing him at gunpoint, his abductors had driven for five hours to a village hideout close to the Saudi border. There he was sheltered, given regular meals and kept informed by his abductors about efforts to free him. They told him of London's insistence that no force should be used.

☐ The five Britons being held in Aden will soon be charged with plotting terrorist attacks, Yemen's Ambassador to Britain said last night.

After confusion prompted by his remarks that the men had already been charged with "bombing in Yemen" and connections to the gang who kidnapped British tourists, Dr Hussein al-Amri was called to a meeting with Baroness Symons, the Foreign Office Minister, to provide clarification. A Foreign Office spokesman said: "The Ambassador has told us his understanding is that no charges have been brought, but he expects them to be brought shortly."

CHRIS HARRIS



Laurence Whitehouse yesterday with some of the children from the school where his wife was a teacher

Widower opposes death penalty

BY RICHARD DUCE

FRIENDS and family yesterday said their final farewells to Margaret Whitehouse, one of the hostages who died in Yemen, in the tranquil surroundings of a private school in Hampshire.

There was no bitterness, only words of fondness and respect for the popular primary school teacher who was shot as she knelt to comfort another hostage during the bloody shootout between her kidnappers and the Yemeni security forces three weeks ago. Her husband Laurence learnt of yesterday's confession by the kidnap leader, Abu Hassan, as he arrived at Lord Wandsworth College for a gathering to celebrate the life of his wife.

Mr Whitehouse said that if he were asked by the Yemeni court to decide the kidnappers' fate, he could not ask for the death penalty. "I don't believe in capital punishment, it's barbaric and inhumane. To execute him would turn him into a martyr and that would probably fuel his movement. I think he needs a very long time in jail. My wife would have shared that view."

Earlier Mr Laurence had attended a private cremation service near by for his wife, accompanied by close family and friends as well as some of the hostages who survived the kidnapping. Mr Whitehouse 54 also a teacher, from Hook, Hampshire, said: "She died in the way she lived, helping others."

Death wish on Britons

Continued from page 1

yesterday. Hours before the case began, snipers positioned themselves on the court's ornate balconies while squads of police sheltered under the palm trees of every major intersection, stopping cars at random.

As Hassan arrived, soldiers crouched behind heavy machine guns bolted onto the back of pick-up trucks and sealed off all approach roads.

The accused, who stood in a wooden dock decorated with plastic imitation panelling, had been given new shirts for their first public appearance and Hassan was allowed to wear the leather pouch that carries the Jambiyah — a traditional curved dagger, which had obviously been removed.

Judge Najab al Khadari, in om Hassan took little interest, sat on a raised dais with three armed guards behind him. He wore a black robe embroidered with the scales of justice and a green sash.

Hassan, however, preferred to chat to people in the front row rather than to pay any attention to the official proceedings. He claimed to have had "contact with groups outside Yemen", but said that he knew none of the five Britons whose release from jail he is said to have demanded in exchange for the 16 hostages.

Hassan nodded when I asked if he knew of Abu Hamza al Masri, the Muslim cleric based in North London, but denied that his Supporters of Sharia organisation had planned bombings in Aden.

Al Masri has admitted to talking to the kidnap gang, but Hassan smirked and said "He may know me as I am a well-known fighter." He barely paused for breath as he delivered his diatribe against the West, and when the judge warned him that he would be removed if he did not desist from making political speeches Hassan sneered: "I will do this my way, not yours."

He look bored as he recalled how he planned the kidnap only the night before and said that he had ambushed the first cars "carrying Christians" that came along. He admitted using the hostages as human shields and described the moment when Mrs Whitehouse and Andrew Thirsk were shot by one of his men, the Egyptian Osama al Masri.

"When Osama knew he was going to be killed he shot two hostages. That was his last moment. With his last breath he was going to do his best. He did it for God. My pistol jammed. If I could have shot more I would have done so."

Hassan tried to exonerate the other two in the dock, but forever interrupted their attempts to speak. At one stage when Hassan felt he was not the centre of attention, he demanded that proceedings be halted so that he could pray. He looked furious when, in the middle of another diatribe, the judge stopped the hearing and said he wanted further investigations and the arrest of the rest of Hassan's gang.

Hassan was anxious to know when his next court performance would be, but police bundled him out of the dock.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chile joins Pinochet hearing

The Chilean Government was granted permission to take part in next week's re-hearing of the General Pinochet appeal in the House of Lords. A panel of three law lords took five minutes to decide to allow Chile to present its case that, under international law, it enjoys state immunity from intervention in its internal affairs.

The law lords also announced that Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, had removed himself from next week's appeal panel because of objections by General Pinochet's lawyers to his links to Amnesty International. Another unnamed law lord on the panel had declared remote links with Chile, but there had been no objections from the parties involved in the case.

Ashworth salary

Janice Miles, the chief executive who presided over the disgraced regime at Ashworth Special Hospital, has continued to draw her £71,000 salary since her resignation in 1997. It emerged yesterday that Ms Miles, who was severely criticised by the Fallon report this week, remains under contract to the Merseyside hospital until March.

Jail for air rage

Thomas Adams, 50, of Farnborough, Hampshire, was jailed for 12 months at Isleworth Crown Court after admitting that he hit a Virgin air stewardess, breaking her nose, and spat at two others in a drunken rage when he wanted to smoke on a US flight.

Officer rewarded

An RUC sergeant covering one of the toughest republican areas of Belfast has won the national title of community police officer of the year. Sergeant Stephen Jones, 41, was chosen for his work in running a police unit in the Markets area of the city.

Under offer

The girl who devised a new code for sending secret messages by computer was yesterday considering offers from three leading universities: Cambridge, Trinity College Dublin, and Liverpool. Sarah Flannery, 16, from Blarney, Co Cork, is to publish her work.

Better by degrees

A pet cat was treated in Weymouth, Dorset, to remove the remains of a plastic toy thermometer lodged in its rear. A young girl had been given a toy vet's set for Christmas, and is believed to have learnt her technique from watching TV vet shows.

Disabled reject benefits plans

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

DISABILITY rights groups yesterday attacked government plans to force all new welfare claimants to attend an interview with a personal adviser or forfeit state aid.

While welcoming the government's pledge to provide greater help to disabled people wanting to work, campaigners questioned whether the advisers would have sufficient training and skills to assess the capabilities and needs of disabled people.

They also doubted whether personal advisers would be able properly to evaluate the full implications — and costs — for an employer hiring a person with a disability.

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation said that the Government did not appear to appreciate that paid employment was simply not a realistic option for many disabled people.

There are 5.8 million people of working age with a disability, but only 42 per cent of them have a job, compared with 80 per cent of the non-disabled population.

The Royal National Institute for the Deaf questioned whether the £80 million that the Government has allocated to test the scheme in 12 pilot areas would stretch to providing professional sign-language interpreters for deaf people.

Duleep Allirajah, the RNID's welfare and benefits policy officer, said: "Even where there are jobs, disabled people tend to be put at the back of the queue by employers because they have higher support costs and companies might not be prepared to take that on."

A government spokesman said that recently bereaved people and those who were obviously too disabled to work would not be required to attend interviews.

Leading article, page 21

Hague attacks hospital crisis

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM HAGUE lambasted the Prime Minister yesterday over the NHS winter crisis, claiming the situation had worsened as a result of political feuding between ministers.

As Tony Blair struggled to reassert his authority during the first Commons clash between the two men this year, Mr Hague blamed long waiting lists, bed cuts and nursing shortages on the Government's failure to get its priorities right.

"While the NHS has been in crisis, personal feuds have taken the place of political principle and personal loans have taken the place of political priorities," Mr Hague said.

In reply Mr Blair gave his strongest hint yet that nurses were in for a big pay award as he said they would be "properly rewarded" to address recruitment and retention difficulties.

Downing Street later refused to discuss figures but agreed that there was a need for a settlement that "is welcomed by existing nurses and to attract future nurses".

Mr Hague, taking the high-risk option of fighting on traditional Labour territory, accused Mr Blair of cutting back on the number of nurses in training and putting huge burdens on short-staffed hospitals.

Mr Hague said: "What we have seen in the last few weeks is intensive care bed availability at the lowest ever, we've seen doctors and nurses under even more pressure than before."

But Mr Blair insisted that the Government had put in more than £2.5 billion extra into the NHS since it came into office and a further £21 billion would be spent from April. He claimed the problems in the health service had been inherited from the Tories and were being dealt with by Labour.

King picks up £7m purse in battle of boxing promoters

British fight organiser shares jokes with wild-haired former partner after judge agrees contract deal

THE heavyweight legal fight between the boxing promoter Frank Warren and his flamboyant American partner Don King was settled in the High Court yesterday with a £7.2 million payout to Mr King.

Britain's "Mr Boxing" agreed the settlement to make a "clean break" of their four-year partnership. The two men were in court, sitting a few feet apart, to hear Mr Justice Lightman agree the settlement.

The judge had ruled in March last year that there was an agreement that the two men would jointly promote British fighters, including Prince Naseem Hamed, the featherweight world champion. Mr Warren was therefore in breach of the duties he owed to Don King Promotions".

Mr King's spokesman, Peter Wilson, said at the time that the ruling meant that the contracts worth millions with all the boxers concerned were owned by the partnership. Thus, with the winding up of the partnership, Mr Warren would have to buy out Mr King's 50 per cent stake "at a cost of tens of millions".

Mr King said after the short hearing yesterday that he did not regard the result as a victory and he was "still very fond" of Mr Warren. "Life goes on," he said.

Mr Warren said it was "cheap at the price" to settle the longstanding dispute. He had the money to pay Mr King, but would be dining tonight on "soup in a basket", he said.

His remarks revived memories of his difficulties after the collapse of the London Arena, the Docklands sports and entertainments complex that failed in 1991 when Mr Warren lost more than £3 million but saw off the threat of personal bankruptcy.

The promoters shook hands outside the court and swapped jokes about their differences. Under the agreement Mr Warren acknowledged his obligation to pay Mr King in recognition of his rights as a partner under the boxing partnership and publicly withdrew all the allegations that he had made against Mr King and his company.

According to Mr King's lawyers, Mr Warren has agreed to sell his house if necessary to make the first of a series of agreed payments.

Outside court, Mr King commented: "My reputation is most important to me and the vindication of my rights both here and in America. The justice system here has given me justice and I am very happy."

But he said he was not gloating over a victory. "I am very fond of him and will continue to be." Mr Warren then tried to persuade Mr King to buy him a meal and said that the settlement was "cheap at the price".

"I am free," Mr Warren said as he descended the lift from the courtroom. "I am glad this is all behind us, but it looks as if I shall be eating soup in a basket tonight."

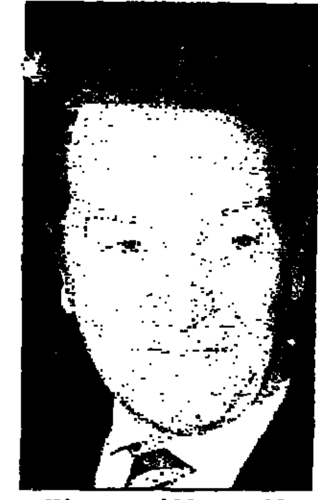
Mr King added: "I have fought long and hard in the English courts to vindicate my reputation and my rights in the partnership which I made with Frank Warren and from which both he and English boxing derived great benefit. On every occasion when the court was required to give a ruling about my rights in this dispute, I have been 100 per cent successful, and the Court of Appeal upheld those rights in December.

"By Frank Warren's withdrawal of his allegations and his agreement to pay me in accordance with my entitlement, my reputation has been upheld. I am therefore very happy at the outcome of this case. I am glad that I can now put this unhappy episode behind me. The British people are warm, congenial and are tremendous boxing fans; I do not intend to abandon them."

Mr King said that he "fully intended" to continue promoting British boxers and to "give them opportunities in the boxing arena". He said that was why he had formed a partnership with Mr Warren and he would continue on that course, particularly with boxers who needed promotion.

One of the biggest bones of contention was a claim by Don King Productions Inc (DKP) that it was entitled to a share of all profits made by Mr Warren during the partnership from British and European fighters, including Hamed.

Asked yesterday whether he would still set up fights for Hamed in the US, he replied: "Naseem is a very good fighter. I will speak to him if he were to ask. The UK guys need a commitment and I will give that commitment to help those who are less fortunate."



Warren: said he would dine on soup in a basket



TOBY MELVILLE

Despite the smile and cigar yesterday, Don King was not gloating. He said that Frank Warren was still a friend

Cliff killing 'was revenge for abuse'

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A man abused as a child took revenge more than 20 years later by throwing his tormenter over a cliff to his death, a court was told yesterday.

Christopher Thomas, 32, told police that he nearly changed his mind as Edwin Wilcox began to pray on the top of Culver Cliff on the Isle of Wight. But he said that Mr Wilcox had prayed for himself instead of his victims, so he had killed him.

Anthony Donne, QC, for the prosecution, told Winchester Crown Court that the body of Mr Wilcox, 64, had never been found. But he said that from the day of the alleged murder, none of his friends or relatives had seen him. He had not been back to his flat, no money had been taken from his bank account and his Giro benefit cheques had not been cashed.

Thomas, a labourer, of Newport, Isle of Wight, denies murdering Mr Wilcox, from Ryde, last January.

Mr Donne said that Mr Wilcox was a promiscuous and eccentric homosexual with a criminal record. He was a Portsmouth Football Club fan and the only trace of him had been a blue and white supporter's scarf found halfway down the cliff.

Mr Donne said: "According to what Thomas told police and other people, he pushed Mr Wilcox over the cliff. Why? Because Eddie Wilcox had abused him sexually when he was young and this was a revenge killing for being one of the people who he said had ruined his life."

Mr Donne said that Mr Thomas, who was put into a children's home at the age of eight, had been sexually abused by Mr Wilcox in his teenage years. Later, he had sexual relationship with the older man in return for money.

Mr Donne said that 12 days after Mr Wilcox had disappeared, Mr Thomas went to the home of Sonia Hackett, a former social worker at a children's home where he had been a resident.

He told her he had seen Mr Wilcox in a fish and chip shop and recognised him as someone who had abused him when he was younger. "Miss Hackett couldn't believe what she was hearing and thought he was winding her up." When he said he was not, he described luring Mr Wilcox to the cliff and pushing him over. Miss Hackett asked where the body was and he replied that it had been a dreadful night, very stormy, and they would never find him.

"He offered to take her up to the Downs and she could see the drag marks on the cliff." She had not believed the story, she saw a report in a local newspaper about a missing man named Eddie Wilcox, she went to the police.

Mr Donne said that Thomas told police: "I threw him over the cliff. I booted him over the cliff because he would not go over.

"If you want to go up there I'll show you. There is a skidmark where I had to drag him down."

Mr Donne said that later Thomas had told police that Mr Wilcox had abused him from the ages of 11 to 16. On the night of the killing he had waited outside Mr Wilcox's home and offered to take him for a drive.

Mr Wilcox had become frightened as they drove to the cliff. When they arrived, Thomas asked him how many other boys he had abused and Mr Wilcox had replied six.

Mr Donne said Thomas told police: "He asked: 'Do you hate me and are you going to kill me?' I said 'Yes. The world needs to be free of you.' And at that stage Eddie Wilcox screamed."

Mr Donne said that Mr Thomas was asked would he still have pushed him over the cliff if he had said a prayer for him. "He replied: 'Not about me. I didn't care about me. He had shown no remorse for what he had done to me or other people. So I dragged him down by his feet and threw him over.'"

Mr Thomas had said that he hated Mr Wilcox but would probably have spared him if he had prayed for his victims. He told police that he was surprised how calm he felt afterwards. He had gone home, made a cup of tea and had a good night's sleep.

The trial continues today.

Foster girl's father plans to launch custody battle

BY CLAUDIA JOSEPH

THE natural father of one of the two girls missing with their foster parents plans to fight for custody of his daughter Jade, he said yesterday.

Paul Duckett announced he wanted to look after his daughter just 24 hours after his former girlfriend, Jackie Bennett, who is the natural mother of Jade, five, and Hannah, three, decided to offer the runaway foster parents her support.

In a change of heart, after Jeff and Jenny Bramley pleaded in an open letter to newspapers to be allowed to adopt her daughters, she admitted she understood their motives.

However Paul Duckett, 24, a computer businessman, who has barely seen his daughter since she was a baby, condemned the Bramleys, who today have been fugitives for four months.

He said: "This is a terrible crime. They cannot be allowed to get away with kidnap. They cannot continue to receive the public sympathy they are getting. If anyone else did it they would be hunted the length and width of the country and would be public enemy number one.

"The children need stability, they have obviously had a difficult time. They went to foster parents because they needed that stability, they needed friends, they needed education. They're just not getting it. I want the children to be returned to start with and then my initial aim is to get Jade out of care and probably apply for residency."

Mr Bramley, 35, who worked as a postal worker, and his wife Jenny, 35, disappeared with the girls from their home in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, on September 14, the day they were due to hand back the girls into local authority care.

They had been fostering the sisters since March and wanted to adopt them but, after several meetings, social workers decided they had "inadequate parenting skills" to meet the special needs of the two children. Although there was no suggestion of any abuse, the couple were understood to be too strict with the children, denying them a bedside drink at night and spoon-feeding them, although they could feed themselves.

There was also concern about an unwillingness to allow the girls to keep in touch with people from their past and a reluctance to let them see previous foster parents.

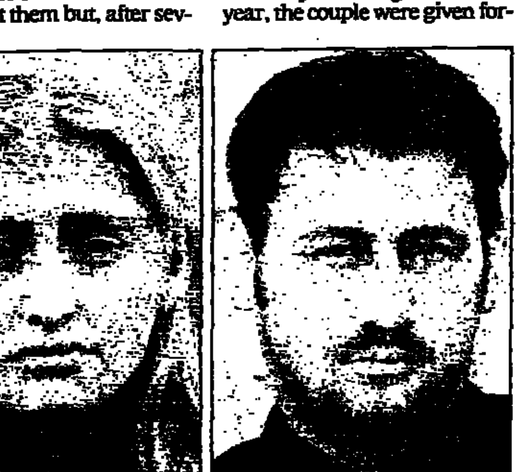
Finally, on August 19 last year, the couple were given formal notification to return the girls. Two weeks later their adoption application was rejected and they began meticulously planning their getaway.

Mr Bramley telephoned in sick, the couple withdrew their £5,000 savings and they drove away from their home.

The couple were backed by Miss Bennett, 24, who wrote a letter to *The Express* asking them to give up their lives as fugitives in return for withdrawing her opposition.

She said: "I did plan to try to get my children back with me but since reading your letter I have changed my views. I will be contacting my solicitor straight away to see if there's anything I can do."

It was disclosed yesterday that Mr Bramley had lied about his past on his application to become a foster parent in 1996 by denying any previous involvement with social services. Social workers discovered three months ago, after the couple disappeared, that Mr Bramley had spent five weeks in a care because he was a persistent truant. That would not automatically have disqualified him from becoming a foster parent but it would have prompted further investigation into his background.



Jackie Bennett, mother, and Paul Duckett, Jade's father

Leading article, page 21

'Sick' surgeon was at grand prix

BY SUE LAPPEMAN

A SURGEON who treated private patients while on sick leave from the NHS has lost his claim for wrongful dismissal.

Gareth Sockett, 50, also jetted off to the Monaco Grand Prix then missed a week-long conference in Harrogate claiming it was too far to travel with his bad back.

The Royal Surrey County Hospital in Guildford sacked Mr Sockett from his £50,000 consultant's position on July 16 last year after discovering that he had treated private patients just hours after he walked out of a clinic claiming he was too ill. Hospital managers found he had held five separate sessions while on two lots of sick leave which he took immediately before and after his trip to Monaco.

An employment tribunal in Croydon yesterday was told that Mr Sockett, a specialist in maxillo-facial surgery, which deals with facial deformities, was absent in total from May 12 until May 31 last year. He left for Monaco on the evening of the last day of his registered sick leave, May 21, using one day's holiday and a weekend for the three-day pre-booked trip. When he returned, he failed to attend a week-long conference for which he had been granted study leave, claiming it would be too painful to drive there.

Jeff Faulkner, the hospital's chief executive, told the tribunal that Mr Sockett should then have told the hospital he was available for work. He said: "Although there were no NHS clinics or operating sessions set up for him, there would have been a lot of trauma incidents to deal with. He should have been assisting junior doctors."

Mr Sockett, a father of four from Elstead, Surrey, said that he managed to make the trip to Monaco, but was too ill to travel to Harrogate: "The race lasted an hour or so and I watched it from the balcony of a friend's flat, not from the stand. I was moving around and chatting to people rather than standing in one place."

He said that a stand-in secretary filled in the sick leave forms incorrectly, which led to the mix-up with the hospital. But the tribunal chairman, David Milton, said: "They are entitled to enforce strictly that consultants do not work in private practices when they have ongoing NHS commitments."

Woollen mills prepare for US cashmere war

'Riot squads' to restore order at child prison

Officers from adult prisons will use batons to defend themselves against detainees, **Richard Ford** reports

PRISON officers in full riot gear will be sent into quell future disturbances at Britain's first child jail under plans drawn up by the Home Office.

Jack Straw wants "tornado teams" of helmeted officers dressed in protective clothing and armed with batons to be on standby to deal with 12 to 15-year-old troublemakers at the Medway Secure Training Centre in Kent.

The officers, fully trained in using tough control and restraint techniques on adult prisoners, be called in from jails on the Isle of Sheppey and in Rochester in the event of a major threat to overall control.

Mr Straw's plan was disclosed on the eve of today's publication of a damning report into the running of the centre, which is managed by Rebound, a subsidiary of Group 4. The move is a further erosion of the progressive philosophy which underpinned the centre. It was originally based on the concept that persistent young offenders should be treated as children in need of education and training, not punishment and restraint.

But, as *The Times* disclosed in December, the centre was left in turmoil after a series of small riots forced the authorities to overhaul their approach in an attempt to restore discipline.

The inspection report of the purpose-built centre is highly critical of the frequency and extent of restraint techniques used by staff on youngsters at the centre during the early months of its operation last year. It will also criticise the regime provided to youngsters and the amount of time they were secluded in their rooms.

Management and staff at the centre are also criticised for serious failings and their naivete in dealing with some of the country's most disturbed teenagers.

The training provided to the 100 staff at the centre, which holds detainees at a cost of £2,400 per head per week, is also condemned by the report of the Social Services Inspectorate, which visited the centre in the autumn.

In spite of the strong criticism of the centre, Sue Clifton, the director, is to remain in her job. No other staff at the centre, where more than £100,000 has been spent replacing and repairing facilities damaged by inmates, are to lose theirs.

Mr Straw has decided that prison officers should be used to deal with disturvbances at the centre following a riot in June in which 11 of the residents ran amok. Staff were forced to seek safety from the young offenders before police in full protective gear were called to restore order.

But Mr Straw's plan to allow prison officers in riot gear to be used to end future disturbances has provoked opposition from senior officials in the prison service, the Prison Governors Association and the Prison Officers Association.

Richard Tilt, the director-general of the prison service, and his deputy, had expressed reservations about the plan and, prison governors have questioned the legality of prison officers being allowed use control and restraint techniques on children.

The Prison Offficers Association has also expressed alarm at the effects of the techniques and at the public's reaction to prison officers being drafted in.

Mark Healy, chairman of the Prison Officers Association, which is to meet Home Office officials about the plan later this month, said: "We have got real concerns about fully trained prison officers applying control and restraint methods on what are effectively children."

Prison officers can pin prisoners to the floor, hold them in arm locks and also use batons to defend themselves. Rebound is forbidden under the terms of its contract from using arm, neck or wrist locks on the children at the centre.

The Medway Secure Centre currently holds 30 inmates. It has room for 40, but its population was reduced in November when the Home Office ordered urgent improvements to staff training and refurbishments to the building to ensure a high standard of care, control and education.


JOHN GILES/PA

"Tornado squads" from adult prisons will be used to end major disturbances at the Medway Secure Training Centre

Science discovers just why bees do it

By Nigel Hawkes
Science Editor

PROMISCUITY works for the bumble bee, scientists have found. By increasing genetic diversity, it protects colonies against attack by parasites.

Honeybee queens typically mate with 10 to 20 or more males on their nuptial flights. This seems surprising given the time and energy it expends.

Boris Baer and Paul Schmid-Hempel, of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, report in Nature that colonies from bumblebee queensinseminated with sperm from specially bred workers with high genetic diversity were the least affected by parasites.

The same would not be true for human beings, where diversity is insured by the fact that a single female is not responsible for giving birth to an entire population. By helping the spread of sexually transmitted disease, promiscuity in humans is more likely to worsen health, not improve it.



Jobs on the line: Tracy Brisbane, left, and Lilly Ainslie

Woollen mills prepare for US cashmere war

By Shirley English

CASHMERE and bananas may not appear to have much in common, but a trade war over the fruit threatens to destroy the economy of a small mill town in the Scottish Borders.

While Europe and America argue over banana imports, the people of Hawick, where nine in ten manufacturing jobs are dependent on the knitwear industry, are bracing themselves for huge job losses.

The United States, in retaliation for European Union quotas favouring Caribbean bananas, is preparing to impose sanctions on cashmere products and certain other European imports. The cashmere industry has been targeted by the US for an increase in import tariffs from 6 to 100 per cent.

The knitwear industry in the Borders claims an increase this size would result in up to a 1,000 job losses — a quarter of the knitwear workforce — and a loss of business worth £20 million.

Cashmere was named along with 16 other randomly chosen items, including batteries, handbags and windscreen wipers, for the new tariffs in a list published last December. Since then the industry has made strenuous efforts to plead its case with America and the EU. Half of all European cashmere and 90 per cent of British cashmere comes from the Borders.

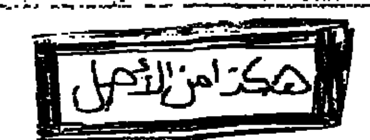
The World Trade Organisation agreed this week to set up a panel to review the situation and is due to report back in March. But the cashmere industry says that will be too late.

Campaigners, including local MPs and the Scottish Cashmere Association, want the US to remove cashmere from the list immediately. Two Borders MPs, Michael Moore and Archy Kirkwood, have called on Tony Blair to write to President Clinton over the issue.

Mr Moore, who was in Washington yesterday to brief US Government officials, said: "The trade war is a serious threat to the Borders and yet the dispute has nothing to do with the area."

The dispute could not have erupted at a worst time for cashmere: the bulk of American orders for the Autumn market are negotiated in January and the row is already having an impact on local knitwear firms. Arthur Rennie, factory manager at Clan Douglas, which employs 120 people in Hawick, said: "If these sanctions go ahead the Scottish cashmere business will die."

Tracy Brisbane, 19, who works for the firm, said: "If the mill closes I'll have to move away from Hawick."



Situation vacant: BBC seeks new Birt

Budding director-generals can reply to newspaper adverts. Raymond Snoddy looks at the contenders

THE BBC is expected within days to appoint headhunters to find Sir John Birt's successor as Director-General. The post, worth more than £300,000 a year, will also be advertised in national newspapers.

Sir John was the clear choice of the Chairman of the BBC, Marmaduke Hussey, now Lord Hussey, when he was appointed in 1992. This time the field is open, and the position could go to an insider or to any one of a number of talented broadcasters from outside the corporation.

The main internal candidates are Tony Hall, chief executive of BBC News; Mark Byford, chief executive of BBC World Service; Mark Thomson, director of regional broadcasting; and Matthew Bannister, chief executive of BBC Production. Patricia Hodgson, director of policy and planning, and Rupert Gavin, chief executive of BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial arm, may also be in the running.

There is a rich collection of external candidates, including Michael Jackson, chief executive of Channel 4; David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5; Greg Dyke, chairman and chief executive of Pearson Television; Richard Eyre, chief executive of the ITV Network Centre; and Howard Stringer, president of Sony's operations in the United States.

Sir Christopher Bland, who succeeded Lord Hussey as Chairman of the BBC's Board of Governors, has had his term extended by two years until 2003. The reason for the extension was to provide continuity and to oversee the appointment of the new director-general and their settling in. The



Birt: was Chairman's clear choice for post

aim is to choose the next director-general by the summer and to have him or her in place by the autumn, to allow a period working in tandem with Sir John, who will leave at the end of his contract in April next year.

The candidate will be chosen by Sir Christopher and the Board of Governors without any overt involvement from civil servants or the Government.

The competition for the top job at the BBC has probably never been more open and Sir Christopher is determined that the process will also be open. The challenge will be enormous. The new director-general will take over in the most hostile commercial environment in the corporation's history.

Whoever gets the job will not only face increasing competition from up to 200 digital channels but will also encounter an immediate period of financial stringency. Under a five-year licence fee settlement, the BBC was given three years of licence fee increases above the rate of inflation to help to launch new digital channels. Sir John's replacement will arrive in time for two years when the licence fee will rise at less than the rate of inflation.

As the digital revolution gathers pace, the director-general will have to resist the temptation to rely on increasingly populist programmes to prop up ratings. The BBC will almost certainly be required to generate more revenue from its commercial activities — selling programmes, videos and merchandise abroad.

This week Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, set up a task force to review the future of the licence fee and to consider alternative ways of raising income through commercial ventures.

John Birt became Director-General in December 1992 after five years as Deputy Director-General. His replacement would ideally have both programme-making and commercial experience. Although the corporation's public service duties, funded by the universal licence fee, will remain its central role the Government is keen for the broadcaster to explore ways of earning additional revenue.

There will, however, be a background of stability for the next seven years. The Government has decided that the licence fee itself will not be in question, at least until 2006, when the BBC's present Royal Charter runs out.



Tony Hall, chief executive of BBC News. The most experienced of the internal candidates and a Birt loyalist, but had a bad year in 1998 because of technological and structural problems.



Mark Byford, chief executive of BBC World Service, is clearly being groomed for the highest BBC office, but has only been in his job a couple of months after a successful stint in the regions.



Michael Jackson, chief executive of Channel 4, former controller of BBC 2 and BBC Broadcast chief. The vacancy may have come too early as he has not had time to stamp his authority on Channel 4.





Matthew Bannister, the man who gave Radio 1 "street cred" but a huge drop in listeners, is also in the running, but again it looks too early. After career in radio, recently became chief executive of BBC Production.

Greg Dyke, chairman of Pearson Television. Friend of Sir Christopher Bland and Sir John Birt from LWT days, but would be a radical choice for BBC. Notoriously impatient with bureaucracy.

David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5, has programme-making and intellectual credentials, but may have upset too many people: has preached that licence fee should be replaced by subscription.

Howard Stringer, a Welshman who has spent his career in the US. Used to run CBS, now president of Sony in US. At 56 he would be an interim choice, giving BBC's young turks time to gain experience.



Richard Eyre, chief executive of ITV Network Centre and former chief executive of Capital Radio. Making a good job of reviving ITV, but has no real experience of making programmes.

BBC1's ratings fall below 30% for first time

By Carol Midgley
Media Correspondent

BBC1's annual share of the television audience has dropped below 30 per cent for the first time, new figures show.

News of the decline comes at a difficult time for the BBC; Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, this week set up a taskforce to look at the future of the licence fee and alternative ways of raising revenue.

The BBC emphasised that all terrestrial channels had shown a loss and it was an inevitable consequence of the increase in choice of channels. Figures from the Broadcasters' Audience Research Board for 1998 show the BBC1 share fell from 30.8 per cent to 29.5 per cent on the previous year. ITV's viewing share fell from 32.9 per cent to 31.7 per cent. BBC2 stayed ahead of Channel 4, with 11.3 per cent, compared with 10.2 per cent.

Apart from the increased number of cable and satellite channels, much of the BBC's loss can be attributed to Channel 5's increased audience.

Last year was not a particularly happy one for the corporation. In the BBC's *Annual Report*, the governors said that the output of situation comedies had been "disappointing". BBC1 was also criticised in the Commons over its *National Lottery Big Ticket Show*. Critics said it breached the spirit of the BBC Charter and encouraged young people to buy scratchcards.

Many of BBC1's Saturday evening programmes attracted fewer viewers than those on ITV.

Last Sunday, BBC1's new series of the drama *The Lakes* attracted about 7 million viewers. On ITV, *Heartbeat* and *London's Burning* attracted 15.4 million and 10.3 million respectively.

A BBC spokeswoman said: "Of course we are disappointed, but we are not surprised. There is more competition from satellite and cable and Channel 5. This is the environment we are in. BBC1 had to compete against 19 new digital channels, but concentrated on quality. We have to remember our charter."

Radon homes risk 'exaggerated'

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

THE dangers of radon, blamed for thousands of deaths worldwide each year, may have been exaggerated. A study at Columbia University in New York suggests that the low levels of exposure to alpha radiation in homes contaminated by radon may not be responsible for as many cancers as previously thought.

If confirmed, it would mean that radon exposures ten to 100 times higher experienced by radon miners — which do cause lung cancer — could not be extrapolated to the home. David Brenner and colleagues exposed 250,000 mouse cells to a single alpha particle, and found that one in 10,000 developed a cancerous mutation, almost indistinguishable from the natural mutation rate.

He then used a random distribution of alpha particles, so that some cells received several and some none at all. The overall dose remained one per cell. In this experiment, there were three mutations per 10,000 cells. He concludes, according to *New Scientist*, that most of the damage occurs in cells exposed to several hits. Two particles hitting a cell in quick succession appear to be six times more dangerous than one. If so, domestic exposures would seldom be sufficient to trigger cancer.

The National Radiological Protection Board says the number of mutations detected in Dr Brenner's experiments was too low to determine the true effect.

Air pollution 'imported'

By Elizabeth Judge

BRITAIN will not be able to meet its target for reducing levels of airborne pollution, the Government has admitted.

John Prescott, Secretary for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, said yesterday that the target set for reducing the level of particulates by 2005 was "unrealistic". The microscopic particles, linked with heart attacks and breathing difficulties, are thought to contribute to up to 24,000 deaths annually.

A review of the National Air Quality Strategy disclosed that levels of particulates in this country are affected by winds carrying them from the Continent. The main sources are vehicle exhausts and emissions from power stations. It is thought that particles blown over from the Continent account for up to 40 per cent of the total.

Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, said: "This is a problem the UK cannot solve on its own. We intend to discuss with our European partners how this issue can be taken forward."

Exterminated Doctor Who lives again

BY ADAM SHERWIN

DOCTOR WHO has cheated time again to make a surprise reappearance. Thirty years after the last print of a much sought-after 1965 episode was thought to have been exterminated, *The Lion*, starring William Hartnell, the original Doctor, has materialised in New Zealand.

The BBC risks embarrassment when it releases the programme on video later this year. It is not Daleks that challenge the Doctor's wits but Islamic warriors. The BBC wiped the programme from its archives in 1969 and banned its distribution to Arabic-speaking countries.

Bruce Grenville, a film buff who stumbled across the 16mm print at a film collectors' fair in Auckland last year, loaned the print to the BBC for restoration.

Its content worried BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial wing, which expected to make a large profit from general video sales. Now it is being aimed at *Doctor Who* collectors as one of the 110 "lost" episodes.

The Lion was the first episode in a four-part drama, *The Crusade*, written by David Whitaker, the series' first script editor. Julian Glover played Richard the Lionheart.

In the missing episode, the Tardis lands in Syria during the Crusades. The Doctor teams up with the Crusaders to rescue his assistant, Barbara, who has been captured by the Persian despot Saladin.

Steve Cole, the BBC's *Doctor Who* project range editor, said: "It is especially unusual this story has turned up, because it was not widely distributed abroad. The depiction of Arabic warriors is not acceptable today.

"The actors have quite clearly 'blacked up' for the parts. The sensitive subject matter ensured that it was not distributed to Arabic-speaking territories."

The BBC said that the episode was destroyed because it



Hartnell: pits his wits against Islamic warriors

had "exceeded its commercial value", along with hundreds of other black-and-white programmes, as colour television was introduced. There are no plans to screen it on television.

The BBC believes that it sent a copy to the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation in 1967, but, although the censor approved the episode, it was not screened. Mr Grenville bought the print cheaply from another collector who was unaware of its rarity.

The discovery of *The Lion* is the first time that a complete missing episode has been recovered since 1991, when all four episodes of *The Tomb of the Cybermen* were found in Hong Kong. Internet sites were buzzing yesterday as enthusiasts of the science fiction series debated the importance of the little-seen episode.

Douglas Sutherland, a *Doctor Who* expert who has seen the episode, said: "It would probably be offensive to Arabic countries. Saladin was actually a very decent man, by all accounts. The historical accuracy is not great, but it is still excellent news for fans."

Alexandra Looseley-Saul, manager of the Who Shop International in East London, the largest emporium of Doctor Who memorabilia in Britain, said: "It's like winning the lottery, and the phone hasn't stopped ringing all day."

The print is being prepared for video release by the BBC's *Doctor Who* restoration team.

Steve Roberts, a member of the team, said: "It is a little bit battered, but we hope to restore it to something like its former glory. It's heartening to know there still are some full episodes out there."

The original print will be returned to Mr Grenville, who intends to auction it. Bids of up to £5,000 are expected from collectors.

The Lion is not quite the most valuable lost episode. Mr Sutherland said: "*Tenth Planet* is the one we all want. It has the first regeneration of the Doctor, from William Hartnell to Patrick Troughton."

Doctor Who was first aired in November 1963. The children's series quickly gained a cult audience, but, after seven Doctors, the corporation said that the costs of a high-quality science-fiction series were not matched by the ratings. It axed the series in 1986.

MISSING, PRESUMED LOST IN TIME

[illegible]



Kate Winslet in high street style . . .

Winslet given a dressing down

BY HELEN RUMBELOW AND GILES WHITTELL

KATE WINSLET has been told to throw her entire wardrobe overboard by an American who named her yesterday as the third worst-dressed woman in the world.

The actress, equally at home in haute couture and high street grunge, is in need of fashion rescue, according to the notorious Mr Blackwell. He described her style as "gaudy" and "creepy", and said that the *Titanic* star was in a "fashion panic".

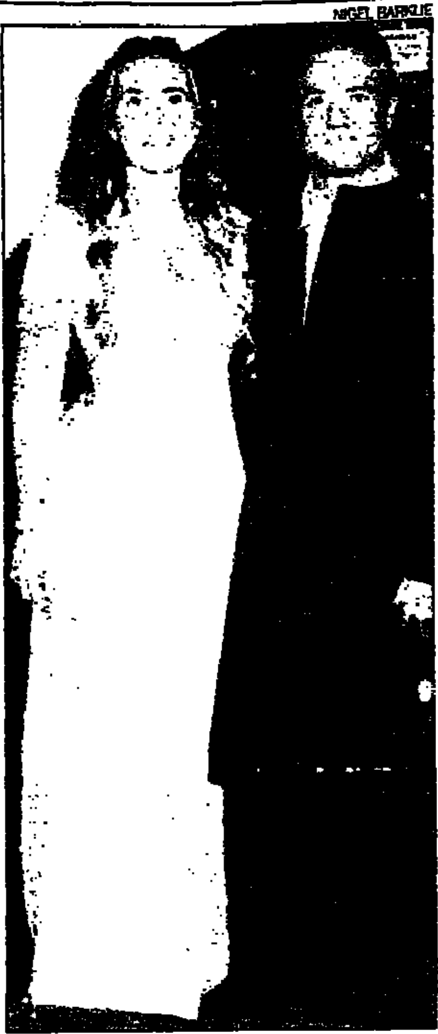
Winslet may take comfort from the fact that Madonna, the singer who launched numerous fashion trends, is at No 2 in the list. The pop star is a "glitzy gargoyle", according to the Beverly Hills fashion consultant who has been compiling the list for 39 years.

Top position went to Linda Tripp, the most reviled woman in America since her recording of President Clinton's telephone calls with Monica Lewinsky. Mr Blackwell, who has declared his first name passé, said Ms Tripp resembled a "shaggy sheepdog in drag" and had blundered into her own "Stylegate". British style experts came to the defence of Winslet, who gathered up the folds of her ornate Alexander McQueen gown for a pub knees-up after her wedding. She dressed down for her engagement announcement, wearing jeans and large grey jumper.

Mark Holgate, fashion features editor at *Vogue*, said that she had natural élan. "There is a cultural gap going on. She is an actress who is focused on giving a good performance, rather than being surrounded with a West Coast coterie of stylists and publicists ready in case the paparazzi should strike."

One other British woman was singled out for ridicule: Alex Kingston, a star of the television series *ER*. Mr Blackwell said that she was in need of emergency fashion restoration.

☐ The list in full: 1, Linda Tripp; 2, Madonna; 3, Kate Winslet; 4, Carmen Electra; 5, Courtney Love; 6, Mariah Carey; 7, Marisa Tomei; 8, Sigourney Weaver; 9, Sandra Bullock; 10, Alex Kingston.



. . . and in haute couture for her wedding

Al Fayed tilts at 72ft phone mast

BY SUE LAPPEMAN

MOHAMED Al Fayed has launched a High Court battle to have a mobile telephone tower near his estate in Surrey torn down. The 72ft mast was erected by Mercury Personal Communications after Tandridge District Council granted it planning permission in July last year on the basis that there was no health risk.

Ian Croxford, QC, for Mr Al Fayed, yesterday asked the High Court to order the council to reconsider its decision because it had not taken into account recent scientific evidence that suggests mobile phone base stations may pose a health risk.

Neil King, for the council, said: "The granting of planning permission was wholly consistent with the proper consideration of the material that was before the committee at the time."

The hearing continues.

Officer in appeal to the Queen

BY GILLIAN HARRIS SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

AN ARMY officer is to appeal to the Queen after he was ordered yesterday to resign or be sacked for writing an unauthorised pamphlet accusing the Army of class prejudice.

Major Eric Joyce was called before his commanding officer at army headquarters in Aldershot to be told to resign. He has two months to leave before being automatically discharged.

Major Joyce, who has 20 years' service, said that he intended to raise a Queen's Petition, which allows members of the Forces to appeal against rulings by commanding officers. "If it is a meaningful process, I will pursue my case," he said. "If the Queen simply refers it back to the Army Board then it would be a waste of time and I will take my case to the European Court of Human Rights."

Major Joyce, 38, who serves with the Adjutant-General's Corps, breached Queen's Regulations in August 1997 when he wrote an article for a Fabian Society pamphlet accusing the Army of sexism, racism and elitism.

He said yesterday: "Sometimes it takes people to challenge convention."

Train firms attack rail inquiry line

By Arthur Leathley, Transport Correspondent

PASSENGERS telephoning the national rail inquiries service to ask about a journey are being given only the details of the most expensive service, some train companies have claimed.

Several small train operators say that telephonists provide details of the highest fares, rather than full information about competing services. Rivals of Virgin trains claim that telephone operators give priority to Richard Branson's company when giving information, although the Virgin service may be more expensive on some routes.

Chiltern Railways, which operates in competition with Virgin between London and Birmingham, claims that its own checks on the service show that callers are often given details about Virgin's intercity service but not about its own cheaper, but slower, journeys between the two cities. North Western Trains, Silverlink and Wales and West, companies that also compete Virgin, have also voiced concerns.

Train operators do not accuse Virgin of rigging the system, but say that telephonists concentrate on providing information about Virgin because it runs more services across Britain than smaller firms. The inquiry service is funded by train operators, but there have been disputes between companies over its quality.

The Association of Train Operating Companies, which is in charge of the service, admitted that the computer system had difficulties in giving full information about competing services. It was "designed to give information about the fastest service, which is usually what passengers want", a spokesman said. "We are working on a new system that will give fuller information about services and fares."



George Reynolds, centre, with six of the staff whose mortgages he paid off in gratitude for saving his business

Boss rewards his magnificent seven

By Paul Wilkinson

A FACTORY owner has rewarded seven workers who helped to save his business by spending £250,000 to pay off their mortgages.

George Reynolds faced ruin when his £20 million kitchen worktop plant was gutted by fire, but the employees he dubbed the "magnificent seven" worked 20-hour days so that orders would not be lost. Four years later, Mr Reynolds has clinched a deal to sell part of his business for £40 million, and has shared his good fortune with the loyal workers.

Mr Reynolds, 63, who left school unable to read or write, said: "Without these lads I wouldn't be where I am today. This is my small thank-you to them for their dedication."

He first thought of giving them cars or holidays, but then had the idea of settling their mortgages. "When the lads came into work I gave them all a cheque and they were amazed." The "magnificent seven", David Powles, Ian Robinson, Mike Metcalf, Mark Hayton, Harry Sams, Harry Pincher and Steve Malloy, will continue at the Direct Worktops factory in Shildon, Co Durham.

Mr Powles, 51, who worked his way up from an electrician to technical director, said: "When he handed me my cheque I was stunned but it is a perfect example of what George is like. He is without doubt the best boss in the world."

PC is convicted of stealing widow's savings

By Paul Wilkinson

A CRIME prevention officer who stole £700 from the life savings of an 83-year-old disabled woman was jailed yesterday for nine months.

The jury took 35 minutes to find PC Kenneth Davies guilty of the theft in January last year, when he called to advise Doris Midwood about safeguarding her money. He is expected to be dismissed from the West Yorkshire force.

Sentencing Davies, who had claimed that he intended to return the money, Judge Robert Taylor said: "You took advantage of an elderly and vulnerable person who was looking to you to advise and protect her."

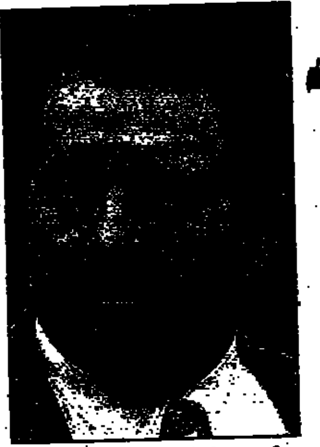
As the verdict was read out, Davies, 44, bowed his head while Mrs Midwood's family gave a cheer. Afterwards her son Barry, 58, said: "This has had a traumatic effect on my mother's health. She has suffered panic attacks. We want Mum back as she used to be.

"When you are in a public service, you have got to be beyond reproach. The reason he got entry to my mother's flat was because he was a policeman. My mother had an implicit trust of the police."

Davies, 44, a father of two from Bradford, has been with the force for almost six years. He has been suspended on full pay since his arrest shortly after the theft.

He denied stealing the money from Mrs Midwood because he said that he had intended to return it but could not find a reason to go back to the widow's home.

During the three-day trial at Leeds Crown Court he said that he had been affected by stress caused by the death of his mother-in-law and his daughter's boyfriend. Lorenzo Pieri, a consultant psychiatrist at St James's Hospital, Leeds, said that Davies had been depressed for at least 12 months before the theft.



Davies: said he planned to return stolen £700

The officer visited Mrs Midwood three times to give advice. She raised the alarm after checking two tins that Davies had given her to hide the savings in. Police searched the officer's house five days later and he was found to have £910 stuffed down the back of his trousers.

Davies told the court: "It was not my intention to steal the money and take off with it. I think I realised I had done something wrong when I went outside the door."

Three charges of possession of counterfeit currency were left on the file. Superintendent Phil Read, of West Yorkshire Police's Discipline and Complaints Department, said: "Occurrences such as these are very sad, thankfully extremely rare, but nevertheless unfortunate and regrettable. West Yorkshire Police makes determined efforts to root out bad apples from its ranks."

Gardener gives slugs a shock

By Paul Wilkinson

AS AN organic gardener, Graham Langton was faced with a conundrum: how to save his cabbages without killing the slugs and snails that were destroying his vegetable patch.

So he turned to his skills as an electrical engineer. He has set up a miniature version of the electric fence used by farmers. But instead of using a shock to keep animals in, Mr Langton, 38, is using his network of tiny electric fences to keep them out. The stem of each of his cabbages is ringed with a piece of copper tubing, through which passes the 12-volt current from a car battery.

Yesterday, in the vegetable patch of the cottage he shares with his wife in the village of Acaster Malbis, near York, he said: "I realised I had a slug problem about five years ago. After trying all the usual methods, like surrounding the veg with gravel, I hit upon the electrical idea. I remembered from my youth seeing slugs move away from electrical rods pushed in the ground to earth things like radios, and realised then that slugs were sensitive to electricity.

"Now, after years of experimenting, I believe I have perfected the system. When the slugs or snails touch the fence they get a little shock and recoil away. Of course, some of the less intelligent keep trying, but give up in the end.

"It's important to me to ensure I can rely on my crop of organic vegetables. I like growing my own and don't trust all the artificial stuff that's sprayed on the supermarket produce."

He insists his invention is humane and kinder to slugs and snails than pellets. He said: "I think we should all live and let live if possible. I actually like the creatures, but don't go along with their destruction of my cabbage crop."

Mr Langton, 39, is protecting a dozen cabbages with his electric fences, but he plans to expand the network as he plants more.

Beatings that make a mockery of peace

Martin Fletcher meets two angry victims of paramilitary punishment

SIX masked IRA men burst into Noel Diver's house last Saturday, pulled the 24-year-old from the sofa and beat him with baseball bats and an iron bar. It was several minutes before they realised that they had the wrong house and the wrong man.

They left without a word, went next door, seized 22-year-old Michael Brennan, and offered a running commentary as they smashed his limbs.

"Wait till you hear this one break," one shouted as he swung a baseball bat down at Mr Brennan's arm. "You're a big man now," said another as they left their victim groaning on his kitchen floor.

This is the story of everyday life on one of the many housing estates in Northern Ireland where republican or loyalist paramilitary groups rule through terror, where the police venture only in armoured Land Rovers, and where neither the ceasefire nor the Good Friday accord have made a jot of difference.

Punishment beatings are commonplace and, like most forms of summary justice, they are often inflicted on the innocent. There have been at least 16 in the first two weeks of this year, not to mention half a dozen shootings and numerous exiles. The only difference in this case is that Mr Diver and Mr Brennan have dared go public. "I don't care. What more can they do to me?" Mr Diver said. "They're scum."

Mr Diver lives with his partner and child on an overtly republican estate in Strabane, Co Tyrone. The Republic's flag flutters from lampposts. English street signs have been replaced by homemade ones in Irish, and there is a stone memorial to an IRA "volunteer" killed by "Crown forces". The walls are daubed with graffiti proclaiming: "RUC — May You Burn in Hell" and "RUC Scum Out". Here the IRA keeps order, but with a brutality that is every bit bad as that of which it accuses the police.

Mr Diver was alone and watching television when the IRA men, wearing black masks and bomber jackets, kicked in his front and back doors at about 6pm. Four began beating him while the other two ran upstairs.

"They kept saying, 'Where is he? Where is he?'," recalled Mr Diver. " 'Who? Who?,' I kept shouting. Then the two men came down the stairs and one shouted to the rest of them, 'We have the wrong boy.' They just stopped and went next door. They didn't say a word." As they left, they ripped out the telephone cord.

"I was thinking, 'What am I getting this for?' I was terrified. I've never been so scared in all my life. They never told me who they were. They just beat me," he said.

Next door, Mr Brennan and his partner, Denise, Mr Diver's sister, heard the commotion. Denise looked out of the window and saw the men running up her path. They kicked in the front door. Mr Brennan was lying in front of the fire with their nine-month-old baby boy, and she threw herself on top of him to protect him.

One of the IRA men grabbed the baby's arm and threw him on the sofa. Mr Brennan told Denise to get off him for her own safety, and three of the men dragged him into the kitchen. A fourth kept her in the living room, where she heard every blow.

"I had to listen to it," she said. "I heard him screaming and begging them to stop. They beat him for about 15 minutes." When they had left "he was chalk white, lying in pain, his arms just dangling". Both Mr Brennan and Mr Diver were taken to hospital. Mr Diver had a broken ankle and severe bruising on his legs, but was discharged on crutches that night.

> 'Wait till you hear this one break,' one shouted as he swung a baseball bat down on Mr Brennan's arm

Mr Brennan had multiple fractures to both arms and a smashed left elbow. He required one operation to reset the bones, and a second for a skin graft. His thighs and calves are still covered in blue-and-yellow bruises. "I don't know how my legs are not broken," he said. He is in intense pain, and will be in hospital for days to come. The damage to his left arm is likely to be permanent.

Mr Brennan, who is unemployed, said that the paramilitaries ordered him to leave the estate months ago, but that he used to sneak back to see his girlfriend and their two children. Beatings are usually meted out for "anti-social behaviour", such as drug-dealing, theft or defying the paramilitaries, but he said that he had no idea what he had done wrong. He called his attackers "scumbags".

To Mr Diver, Mr Brennan and their partners, the peace process is an irrelevance. "It's changed nothing as far as I'm concerned," said Denise.

The statistics bear her out. There were 237 beatings, shootings and kneecappings recorded last year, and the rate has significantly increased in 1999.

The attacks are a blatant breach of the Good Friday accord by loyalist and republican groups whose political representatives now sit in the Northern Ireland assembly. The Government and the Province's political leaders regularly condemn the attacks, but no attempt has been made to sanction those representatives. The thugs themselves are rarely, if ever, caught.


CRISPIN RODWELL

Michael Brennan, left, and Noel Diver were beaten with baseball bats and an iron bar

Australian PM rebuffs Adams

AUSTRALIA'S Prime Minister yesterday ruled out meeting Gerry Adams and belittled his role in Northern Ireland's peace accord. John Howard said that David Trimble and John Hume were the real heroes, as they had foresworn violence all along.

Mr Adams, the Sinn Fein president, was barred until recently from entering Australia and will arrive there on February 15 for an eight-day visit in which he will meet a number of political figures.

Mr Howard's fellow conservative, Jeff Kennett, the Premier of Victoria, who will meet Mr Adams in Melbourne, said it would have been "churlish" to refuse an invitation. The Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, also indicated that he would be happy to meet Adams if invited, as will the Opposition Labor leader, Kim Beazley. However, a spokesman for Mr Howard formally ruled out a meeting and said that the Prime Minister regarded Mr Trimble and Mr Hume as the heroes of the peace accord: "The Prime Minister would be honoured and privileged to meet either or both of them if they came to Australia. They foreswore violence all along and were recognised as such with the Nobel Peace Prize."

A spokesman for Mr Adams said that he was willing to meet anyone who wanted to see him, but he would not lose any sleep if Mr Howard declined.

Mr Howard, an avowed monarchist and supporter of a British head of state for Australia, has previously demonstrated similar opposition to South Africa's President Mandela. South Africa is one of the few important trading partners of Australia that Mr Howard has not visited and Mr Mandela has not been to Australia during Mr Howard's rule.

Australia formally acknowledged the IRA ceasefire and Mr Adams's contribution to the peace talks when it granted him a visa last November.



Howard: he has also opposed Mandela visit

Crimes by girls rise tenfold

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE number of teenage girls with criminal convictions has risen tenfold in the past 50 years, according to a report on the changing fortunes of youth.

The study, commissioned by the Variety Club of Great Britain, a children's charity, shows that, although the majority of juvenile crime is still committed by boys, it is rising much faster among girls.

Between 1949 and 1996, the conviction rate among boys aged ten to 17 almost tripled from 1,857 per 100,000 to 5,400 in England and Wales. Among girls, the rate rose from 137 per 100,000 to 1,500.

Over the same period the total number of young people found guilty of a crime rose from 65,600 to 179,300.

Roger Smith, head of policy at the Children's Society, said that much of the increase was probably because there were more police. Moreover, as more people insured their property, there was a greater incentive to report burglaries. "It is also true to say that there is more to steal today," he said.

Resentment at 'morning after' calls

BY HELEN RUMBELOW

MORE than a third of hospitals refuse to give women emergency contraception because casualty doctors do not see it as a priority, a report says today.

A survey of all 560 accident and emergency departments in Britain found that 96 per cent were often asked for emergency contraception, such as the "morning after" pill, but only 57 per cent provided it. Even among those, a fifth felt it was a misuse of overburdened resources.

Half of all the departments, which were surveyed by Babatunde Gbolade, consultant gynaecologist at St James's University Hospital, Leeds, said that there was strong opposition to the service from their staff, mostly from doctors.

This conflicts with Department of Health guidelines on reducing unwanted pregnancies. Hospitals' 24-hour service is thought to be vital in delivering effective emergency contraception, which works better if taken within a day of unprotected sex.

New da[...] set fo[...] deal ov[...] weapo[...]

BY MARTIN FLETC[...]

THE Government ye[...] set March 10 as the ta[...] transferring power to [...]ern Ireland's Assemb[...] the issue of IRA disarr[...] is resolved by then.

Mo Mowlam, the N[...] Ireland Secretary, said [...]fort to concentrate [...] and republican mind[...] Monday I said the fi[...] line was now in sight.[...] am publishing the me[...] of how to get there."

March 10 is the earli[...] by which the necessary [...]tion can be put through [...]ment, but it also falls [...] week before the Pr[...] political leaders attend [...] Patrick's Day celebrat[...] the White House. Th[...] more pressure on them [...] solve the decommis[...] issue.

David Trimble, th[...] Minister, says he can[...] will not establish an ex[...] that includes Sinn Fei[...] the IRA demonstrat[...] commitment to p[...] means with a downpa[...] of weaponry.

Sinn Fein's leader[...] equally adamant th[...] Good Friday accord [...] conditions on their adr[...] to government and t[...] any case, they could no[...]er IRA disarmament.

Dr Mowlam acknow[...] the hurdles ahead, b[...] that the will existed [...] mount them and that [...] wanted to return to viol[...]

3ackbenchers urge ninisters to behave

LP says party discipline must apply to everyone, writes **Jill Sherman**

)R Labour backbench- sterday urged the Gov- nt to get its act together strongly condemning ers for failing to adopt me strict discipline as rty's MPs.

. packed meeting of the mentary Labour Party, ed by Peter Mandelson, poke out against minis- behaviour in recent , claiming that it had nore damage to the Gov- nt than any other epi- 1 this Parliament.

e than 200 MPs — over ialf the PLP — attended tical meeting, as did sev- iinisters, including John ott, Alistair Darling, Ann ·, Margaret Beckett and Brown. Mr Mandelson, rmer Trade and Industry ary who resigned over iome loan affair, re- d silent throughout the ıg.

: of the most outspoken was Gwyneth Dun- /, the MP for Crewe and vich, who has been at iinster for more than 30 She told MPs that she isappointed that the Gov- ent had focused recently idividuals rather than

: are the most disci- l parliamentary party I ever been a member of," id.

was a pity that the same f discipline has not been shown by some members of the Government."


Strong words: Gwyneth Dunwoody and Clive Soley

Kevin Barron, MP for Rother Valley, echoed Mrs Dunwoody's comments, saying that his own constituency party had been disillusioned by the events of the past month, which has seen the resignation of two ministers and one press aide.

Clive Soley, chairman of the PLP and a Blair loyalist, was equally critical of the Government. He said that the events of last month were the most "serious incidents" since the general election, and that counter-briefing and spinning against ministers had to stop.

Mr Soley, who later conveyed the same message to the Prime Minister at a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee, said that it was vital to learn from the mistakes made last month.

Although there was no mention by name of any of the ministers who had been involved, Mr Soley also drew attention to the exemplary behaviour of the PLP, which had imposed its own self discipline after 18 years in opposition. "We expect the Government to do the same," he said.

Mrs Dunwoody said that she opposed any coalition with the Liberal Democrats or closer relations between the two parties. John Prescott, who has made clear that he shares the same view, remained silent. Mr Soley said that while he did not support coalition, he could see nothing wrong with working with the Liberal Democrats in areas of common interest.

Mr Soley used his later meeting with Mr Blair to press home MPs' concerns that Mr Mandleson should not return too quickly to government. Senior figures in the party argue that it would be highly damaging to the Prime Minister if he was seen to rely too heavily on Mr Mandelson and that it was vital that he publicly distanced himself from the former minister. Mr Soley believes that Mr Mandelson should not return to government before the next election.

Later, Paul Flynn, MP for Newport West, echoed his colleagues' warnings that Mr Mandelson must not be allowed to return too soon. "The party has been bruised and our reputation has been damaged by this incident," he said.

"Nobody wants to have a witch-hunt against Peter Mandelson personally. He has been a very able minister and has contributed a great deal to our party. But that impression of sleaze is there and he has to have at least a couple of years on the backbenches, and one hopes that that is a very fruitful period," he told BBC Radio 4.

Jack Cunningham, the "Cabinet enforcer", insisted that there was no chance of Mr Mandelson making a swift return. "I don't think he's going to be back in the Government in the near future and those people who write those stories in the newspapers are just misleading not only Labour backbenchers, but the public as a whole," he said.


Chided: Peter Mandelson leaving the Commons yesterday

Lord Shore, a Cabinet minister in the last Labour Government, also criticised the decision to allow Mr Mandelson to meet a German politician last week as a personal representative of Mr Blair. He dismissed the Government's defence that Mr Mandelson had been acting in a party capacity, rather than a Government capacity.

"In fact, he was meeting a German who was a minister and, therefore, the appropriate person to meet that minister was a minister," Lord Shore said.

"This is too early, frankly, and the rehabilitation of Peter Mandelson isn't in his interests, nor I think in the interests of the Prime Minister."

Testing time for Byers and sellers

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

The resignation of Peter Mandelson has been examined from almost every angle, apart, curiously, from the most direct one: his legacy at the Department of Trade and Industry. During his five months there, he raised the profile of the department and the morale of its civil servants, in the process earning praise from many businessmen. He put substance into the Blairite rhetoric about creating a new relationship with industry.

That presents an intriguing challenge for Stephen Byers, the twelth Trade and Industry Secretary in less than 19 years. He shares the modernising agenda of his predecessor and is the very model of the New Labour minister. But he is not as well known nor as close to the Prime Minister as Mr Mandelson. Mr Byers is likely to be cautious in the short-term. He has already been careful to ensure that any decisions resulting from the inquiry into Geoffrey Robinson will be taken by Sir Michael Scholar, his Permanent Secretary, although Mr Byers will answer to Parliament.

Mr Byers is keen to be seen as a team player, working closely with his former departmental bosses, Gordon Brown and David Blunkett, as well with Alan Milburn. His first big decision has been to endorse one of Mr Mandelson's last decisions on the *Fairness at Work* proposals on trade union law. After looking at the latter's statement on December 17, Mr Byers decided that it would be more trouble than it was worth to reopen the agonisingly crafted compromise package on compensation and recognition. He has now told John Monks of the TUC and Adair Turner of the CBI of his view. Mr Byers sees the Competitiveness White Paper, published a few days before Mr Mandelson's resignation, as a good modernising statement. But it left open a number of questions: for instance, a consultative paper will come out shortly on whether mergers should still be decided by ministers. Expect to see a greater linkage between competition and a package to help consumers.

Mr Byers is also interested in developing policy on science and updating the skills of those in work. The Government package last year to help preserve jobs in the coal industry was essentially a holding exercise and further decisions will have to be taken on energy policy to promote competition. Mr Mandelson was out in front in the debate about when and how, rather than if, Britain joins a single currency. Mr Byers is in the pro-European camp, but is likely to be tactically more cautious for the time being. His priority is helping business deal with the launch of the Euro this month and, at present, he still sees decisions on British entry coming after the general election.

There is a tricky phase for the Government during the next few months as Germany, holding the European presidency for the first half of the year, pushes proposals on tax harmonisation. This has already affected the tone of some comments by businessmen about Europe. Mr Byers is unlikely to be as much as high profile campaigner on Europe as Mr Mandelson.

Mr Byers has risen fast so far by being the quintessential Blairite. He is above all determined to show that the New Labour agenda has not stalled — and that means keeping the DTI in the public eye.

Cabinet stands by its man in Welsh contest

By Roland Watson and Valerie Elliott

TONY BLAIR is to spearhead a Cabinet drive to boost the profile of Alun Michael, the Welsh Secretary.

It comes amid serious concern in Downing Street that Mr Michael is failing to make ground on Rhodri Morgan in the race to become the Principality's First Minister.

The Prime Minister will be joined by John Prescott and Mo Mowlam. They will speak to the party's rank and file in Wales over the next 48 hours with Mr Michael by their side. Gordon Brown is expected to visit in the next fortnight. More than 100 senior members of the Welsh Labour Party are due to attend a drinks reception in No 10 tonight.

Mr Michael faces a critical test of his leadership chances on Saturday, when the AEU becomes the first big union to choose between him and Mr Morgan. However, since he took over from Ron Davies in October, the party hierarchy is alarmed at the lack of evidence that Mr Michael has closed the huge gap between him and the maverick Mr Morgan.

With five weeks to go, Mr Michael suffered a serious blow with the announcement of the departure of his most senior civil servant. Rachel Lomax, permanent secretary at the Welsh Office, is to take up a new post in the Department of Social Security. She had previously insisted that she intended to "see through" the creation of the Welsh assembly and to become its first permanent secretary.

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MPs condemn waste of cash in care budgets

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

CONFUSION, duplication and fragmentation of health and social services means elderly and disabled people are failing to get the care they need and scarce resources are being wasted, according to the House of Commons Select Committee on Health.

Calling for an end to the "tribalism" between the two services, the committee says in a report published yesterday that charging for home visits probably costs more than it collects and that the best way forward is to integrate the two services with a joint budget.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, has admitted that a "Berlin Wall" exists between health and social services.

The report says: "This confusion is epitomised by the farcical question of whether a person needing a bath should receive a 'health bath' or a 'social bath' — the first comes free, the second (in theory at least) has to be paid for on a means-tested basis." In one authority area the riddle of the bath had been solved by declaring that all washing above the waist was for social reasons and all washing below the waist was for health reasons.

At present, health care is provided free of charge through the NHS, while social care in the home has to be paid for if a patient has money. Local authorities are assumed to be able to raise 9 per cent of the cost of home care through charges, but the figure varies across the country from nothing to 23 per cent.

"Current charging policies create perverse incentives, including cost-shunting between agencies," the report says. "It is arguable that charging, particularly for domiciliary care services, is having a detrimental effect on potential collaboration between agencies, which more than outweighs the benefits of the revenue. We believe the charging regime will always be a barrier to some people accessing services."

The committee calls for a survey to be carried out urgently to find out what the impact of charges is on the NHS and to look into the implications of abolishing them altogether. One consequence was that hospital patients who were fit enough to go home could not do so because home care could not be arranged. Relatives who would have to pay for care in the home wanted the patient to stay in the hospital for free, though the hospital urgently needed the bed.

The committee found that, in the first quarter of this financial year, 6,000 people over 75 were in hospital because discharge could not be carried out for "bureaucratic reasons", rather than because they were too unwell to go home. Terminal cancer patients were often unable to leave hospital for up to 26 days because of the difficulty in putting together a social services package for them.

David Hinchliffe, chairman of the committee and the Labour MP for Wakefield, said that there was a pressing need for national criteria to assess care needs in order to stop people in different parts of the country being treated in different ways.

The NHS Confederation said that it did not agree that the health service should make long-term investments in local authority services. "NHS funding is made available by Parliament for health and health services, not social care," said Stephen Thornton, its chief executive.



The pygmy hippopotamus, which weighs 7.8kg, was born last month by Caesarean section. Its mother died during surgery

The hippo that is a bit of a handful

A BABY pygmy hippopotamus went on show for the first time at Whipsnade Wild Animal Park yesterday.

The orphaned animal, which is four weeks old and weighs 7.8 kilogram, loves nothing more than a warm bath and a tickle behind the ears, according to her keeper, Cliff Tack.

"It's wonderful to have this youngster here and I'm looking forward to her growing up within our breeding programme," he said. "She's a thirsty little thing and loves her milk."

Veterinary surgeons performed an emergency Caesarean section on her mother, Valenta, who died during surgery. Her offspring will be named by fundraisers shortly.

Pygmy hippos, which are found in West Africa, are an endangered species. Officials at the park in Bedfordshire hope their specimen will be part of a Europe-wide breeding programme.



Winter heat kills last Ice Age frog

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

A WHOLE species was declared extinct yesterday after the death of Lucky the pool frog at the weekend.

No other native example of *Rana lessonae*, believed to have survived in Britain since the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago, has been seen in the wild since Lucky was captured in 1993, and experts believe it was the last of a line.

It means that Britain has now only one species of native frog, the common frog or *Rana temporaria*. Charles Snell, an amphibian expert at Greenwich University who was looking after Lucky, who is believed to have died of old age, said that the warm winter had been a disaster for the male pool frog.

"Warm winters are not good for hibernating frogs and he kept waking up, which was very bad news," he said.



Lucky: the last of his kind

The pool frog is fairly common on the Continent. Over the past 150 years its only stronghold in Britain has been small pools in Norfolk left over from glaciation.

Lucky was captured by a Norfolk naturalist who managed to breed him with European females. One hope is to try to breed back the British pool frog from continental offspring. "All is not lost. I do have pool frogs with British genes in them," Dr Snell said.

Santer's velvet touch fails to smooth MEPs

Man who lacks the Machiavellian instinct could not sense the storm brewing, writes Charles Bremner

IF JACQUES SANTER, President of the European Commission, were not such an incurable optimist, his team would probably never have come close to the political guillotine that they faced in the Strasbourg Parliament yesterday.

The failure of the genial Luxembourger to measure the gravity of the crisis which began brewing at the Parliament last December was typical of a man who has little of the Machiavellian instinct and a tendency to overlook flaws in people.

Mr Santer's nature as an unthreatening, decent sort was just what John Major wanted when his veto against Jean-Luc Dehaene of Belgium catapulated the then Luxembourg Prime Minister into the throne of the departing Jacques Delors in 1994. Two years before the "mad cow" crisis, Mr Major hailed his choice as "a safe pair of hands".

However, Mr Santer's "exceptional optimism", as it was called by Gaston Thorn, an earlier Luxembourg Commission chief, has been a handicap for the captain of a drifting vessel with a fractious crew of big political egos.

Rather than an avuncular *primus inter pares*, the Commission needed a firm hand to whip the 17,000-strong enterprise into shape and rid "the House", as it is known, of the odour of malfeasance. "Santer is out of touch and does not seem to realise what is going on in his shop," a senior British MEP said as the EU's institutional crisis staggered towards resolution last night.


Santer: accused of being out of touch

Mr Santer's misjudgments in the Parliament's crisis began in December when he challenged it to "back him or sack him" when it rejected the Commission's accounts. The risk-making was compounded by Pauline Green, leader of the dominant Socialist bloc, when she resorted to a dangerous ploy in which she called a motion of censure and dared MEPs to vote for it. Passage by a majority would automatically sack the Commission.

This week Mr Santer managed to rile the assembly further with a bland speech that contained concessions but did little to show that he understood the depth of public indignation over malpractice and corruption in his administration. A chorus of "he just doesn't get it" could be heard in all 11 languages of the Union. A day later, on Tuesday, he came close to political suicide by saying his honour required him to resign if the Parliament voted for the sacking of his two most tainted colleagues: Edith Cresson of France and Manuel Marín of Spain.

Executives of the European Commission squabbling over sleaze and mismanagement: the view of Turner in The Irish Times of Dublin

The tight-knit team of Luxembourgers around Mr Santer, 61, say he has done well, given the restrictions of the office and the wishes of the member Governments who run the Union. For a start, the Brussels executive is a collegiate body in which the President has no power over his 19 colleagues, who are appointed by their Governments. Mme Cresson, a former French Prime Minister, was hardly likely to take orders from a modest Luxembourger. Mr Santer also points out that much of the worst sleaze now under discussion was bequeathed to him by M Delors, who was famous for neglecting management while pursuing his historic vision. Queasy after their federalist rush at Maastricht, the Governments were happy with the bumbling style of the man known as Monsieur Sancerre, a sociable type and devotee of good food and drink. In office, Mr Santer has lived up at least partially to the slogan which he brought to the Breydel, the Commission headquarters in Brussels: "Doing less, but doing it better". The executive has greatly cut back on legislative proposals that flooded out in the Delors administration. New directives are rare these days. The technical side to the smooth launch of monetary union was a Commission success and the Governments are happy with its detailed preparations for the next big bout of spending reforms, about to come up for fierce negotiation under German chairmanship.

> ‘He did little to show that he understood the depth of indignation over corruption and malpractice’

To the federal-minded, the unassertive Mr Santer symbolises the decline in the Commission's authority relative to the Council of member Governments. For them, this began at Maastricht, the final act of the Delors era, when foreign relations and police and immigration affairs were taken fully into the hands of the Council as "intergovernmental" business, leaving the Commission and the Parliament largely in the role of spectators.

The appetite for a strong Commission faded further with the entry of Sweden, Finland and Austria into the Union in 1995. Since then, the Commission has administered the EU's day-to-day affairs, from competition policy to foreign trade, with efficiency but initiated little, largely taking orders from the Council, dominated by its big players, France and Germany, with Britain playing the part of trouble-maker.

In the view of hostile MEPs and critics, Mr Santer's flaw has been his failure to grasp the urgency of an end to the culture of self-indulgent secrecy, cronyism and sloppy management that reigns inside the Commission's "services".

Surveying Mr Santer's impending escape from the jaws of disaster yesterday, some MEPs were remembering Mr Thorn's assessment of his fellow Luxembourger's unusual political approach. "He manages to deflate his opponents by ignoring their case and he simply gives negative issues a positive gloss." The technique seemed to have got the better of the Strasbourg Parliament.

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Pig of a problem on French hit list

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FARMERS in southeast France are battling a hairy hybrid invader, half wild boar and half domestic pig, which eats whatever it can find, breeds astonishingly and occasionally flattens an unsuspecting villager putting out the rubbish.

The beast, known as a *cochonglier* (a combination of *cochon*, pig, and *sanglier*, boar) first appeared ten years ago, but is now spreading at such a rate that a group was formed last week — the Association Against the Pig-Boar: Chromosome 37 — dedicated to eradicating it.

Arable farmers in 41 southern French departments say their crops are being devastated by the hybrids. Last year alone an estimated 320,000 *cochongliers* were killed by hunters. "We must bring about the destruction of this chromosomal aberration using every available means: hunts, traps, shooting with night-sights," said a spokesman for the association.

The *cochonglier* came about because farmers, keen to produce the prized and delicious wild boar in captivity, were finding the naturally agressive animal too much of a handful. By mating a domestic sow with a male wild boar, breeders created a more docile animal that was indiscriminate in its diet but very boar in flavour. Hunters later released the *cochongliers* into the countryside, because they are less wary of humans than wild boar and thus easier to shoot. Wild boar raise one or two offspring a year, while the *cochonglier* can produce up to eight twice a year.

"They are causing such devastation that soon some cultivated land will become completely arid," Gérard Gilles, president of the Association Against the Pig-Boar, said.

As always, French hunters face more of a threat from each other than wild game. Anti-hunting groups point out that, of the 47 people killed in hunting accidents in 1997, almost all were shot by fellow *cochonglier*-hunters.

Kosovo hostages deal averts the threat of Serbian offensive

EIGHT Yugoslav Army soldiers held hostage by ethnic Albanian guerrillas were released yesterday, with the Albanians winning an extraordinary concession from the Serb authorities. In a secretive deal with international monitors, it was agreed that nine Albanian fighters should be freed later next week.

William Walker, the head of the ceasefire verification mission in Kosovo, said that for the moment at least the possibility of a new Serb offensive had been avoided.

KLA has won a surprising concession, Tom Walker reports from Likovac

But for five tense hours yesterday in the remote central Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) headquarters of Likovac, the ambassador and his team cut gloomy figures.

The day did not start auspiciously for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Osce), one of whose vehicles slipped off the muddy track leading to Likovac, while the convoy bringing Mr Walker became lost. A bloody corpse dumped on the main road outside Pristina hardly helped to raise spirits. Journalists and international officials alike were then for some reason directed by the KLA down a track known as one of the most deadly in Kosovo.

The OSCE, whose chairman Knut Vollebaek, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, had been distinctly upbeat about the hostage release on Tuesday night, became increasingly uneasy as the hours ticked by in the derelict village, which was burned by Serb forces in a counter-offensive in the late summer. "It's bloody ridiculous what the Albanians are asking for," said one source.

While the talks dragged on, the international media and the less important ranks of Osce did their best to stay warm and sustained themselves with tea and spicy beefburgers in the local KLA cafe. The guerrillas completely surrounded the village, and expelled journalists from the Serb state news agency, Tanjug.

When the deal was at last announced in the gathering darkness, Mr Walker was reluctant to be drawn on any concessions made to the KLA. However, sources close to his organisation admitted that the Serb authorities had agreed to release nine KLA fighters, one of them a 17-year-old girl, captured on the border near Prizren last month. That the Serbs should free prisoners who were recently heavily armed and uniformed insurgents — the Army killed 36 of their colleagues — seems almost unfathomable, and several diplomats were sceptical that a very Balkan exchange can pass without further trouble. According to the Yugoslav army, the hostages — eight conscript soldiers, three of whom were from Montenegro — were released as soon as the deal was fixed in the northern mining town of Kosovo Mitrovica. Communications were maintained with the rebel captors throughout the day by KLA satellite telephone.

☐ Tirana: The Albanian Parliament approved legislation aimed at stemming the illegal exodus of people across the Adriatic Sea to Italy by dinghy. The new law took effect immediately. It bans boats of less than 70 horsepower further than two miles from the coast unless they advise the border police first. *(AP)*

Refugee wave set to break on German border

FROM ROGER BOYES IN ZITTAU

TENS of thousands of Kosovo Albanians, the vanguard of a new European refugee wave, are waiting in Czech boarding houses and farmsteads for their chance to slip through the forests into Germany, and into euroland.

The town that is taking the strain is Zittau, the end of the German railway line, Saxony's most remote southeastern corner. There, everybody is feeling the pressure of the distant Kosovo war. On euroland's frontline are the taxi drivers of Zittau who, in a remarkable token of the country's increasing fear of illegal immigration, are being arrested and jailed for picking up any strangers who look like Kosovans.

About 300,000 people from former Yugoslavia used Germany as a haven during the Balkan wars of the mid-1990s and administered a shock to the system, giving fresh wind to right-wing extremists, sparking tension in local communities. Asylum rules have been tightened and a new German Government echoes the sentiment of the Kohl administration: the boat is full.

The Saxon-Czech border is a neuralgic point. Kosovans who have paid about $5,000 (£3,300) each — their life savings — to "people smugglers" regard it as an easier crossing than the traditional route across the frozen Oder and Neisse rivers dividing Germany and Poland to the north.

"The focus of illegal immigration has shifted from the Polish to the Czech border," says Bernd Walter, head of the eastern section of the German border police. His 500-mile territory covers most of the German border with the Czech Republic and Poland. Nearly 18,000 "illegals" were arrested last year, 13,000 of them close to Zittau. At least 40,000 evaded his grip.

Twenty thousand Kosovans have taken shelter in Bosnia; tens of thousands more are making their way into Austria. But it is here along the craggy, snow-capped foothills and valleys of the Lausitz mountains that the professional "people smugglers" are pushing hardest.

Quite simply, Germany is seen as Europe's most comfortable berth. The number of border guards has been trebled to 2,000, their fast patrol cars, camouflage vans and snarling dogs are part of the local scene.

The surly faces of the taxi drivers reveal more, however, than the slight swagger of the frontier guards with their secure jobs, pensions and smart uniforms. For the drivers have — in a move quite unprecedented in Europe — become *foot soldiers in the war against illegal immigration.*

If a cab driver in Zittau, or anywhere else on the border, picks up a foreigner who later turns out to be an illegal immigrant, he can be jailed. In the Zittau region 22 out of 73 taxi drivers are being investigated on charges of assisting illegal immigrants and six have been jailed for terms between 12 and 26 months.

The local chamber of commerce advises taxi drivers to avoid foreign-looking passengers who appear to be wet or carrying luggage. Even though I am blond, blue-eyed, carried no bag and was entirely dry, my Zittau driver wanted to check my passport before letting me into his car.

He was right to be suspicious. Later in the day we were stopped by a frontier guard patrol which did not much like the look of my British passport or the lack of an up-to-date resident permit.

Bonn set to ease citizenship laws

ABOUT four million long-term foreign residents of Germany will find it easier to gain German citizenship, according to a parliamentary Bill unveiled yesterday (Roger Boyes writes). However, candidates will have to master the German language and demonstrate that they have a clean criminal record.

The measure, which will be steered through parliament by the summer, has sparked a controversy and the Christian Democratic Opposition has taken the unusual step of launching a nationwide petition to stop or slow the legislation. The basis of German citizenship remains the 1913 blood laws in which German ancestry counts for more than place of birth. The amended law, approved yesterday by the Cabinet, allows foreigners who have lived in Germany for at least eight years to apply for dual citizenship.

Children born in Germany to foreigners who themselves were either born there or came to the country before the age of 14 will be given German passports automatically. That applies to the many Turkish families who arrived in the 1960s and whose children attend German schools.

The Opposition says that dual citizenship encourages the creation of a parallel world in which young Turks enjoy the privileges of the European Union but keep their ethnic identity.



CHRIS WARDE-JONES

Melandri: "Culture is a national asset, our equivalent of oilfields or diamonds."

New culture chief seeks to change Italian mentality

Minister aims to wed arts and technology writes Richard Owen in Rome

THREE years after Venice's La Fenice opera house was destroyed by fire, Giovanna Melandri, Italy's Minister of Culture, has made an urgent appeal to Massimo Cacciari, the Mayor of Venice, to help to resolve legal wrangles that have halted the theatre's restoration and shattered hopes of a reopening for the start of the new millennium.

"The restoration of La Fenice should have been nearing completion by now," Signora Melandri said at her office in a 16th-century palazzo in Rome's centre. While she "could not intervene in the judicial process", she was releasing government funds in the hope that "an injection of cash will help to solve the logjam."

Three months ago Signora Melandri, 36, succeeded Walter Veltroni after the centre-Left Government of Professor Romano Prodi fell in October. The appointment caused a ripple, not only because she was relatively young and inexperienced, but also because she was born in New York, speaks fluent English and, despite leftwing views, moves in fashionable circles, exposing her to the charge of "champagne socialism".

She had also just given birth to Maddalena, and has since been sniped at for combining ministerial office with breast-feeding. Just before Christmas she fell out with Riccardo Muti, chief conductor and director of La Scala Opera in Milan, for failing to attend the opening night of the new season, preferring to go to a dinner in Rome to be near her child.

But there is no doubting her dedication to "marketing Italy" for the administration led by Massimo D'Alema, head of the ex-Communist Party of the Democratic Left (PDS). She formerly headed the party's Communications Department, evolving policy on digital television and other information technologies. She admires Signor Veltroni, who extended museum opening hours to evenings and Sundays — a revolution in the sleepy world of arts administration. The experiment lasted six months, but Signora Melandri plans to reintroduce it in April for two years. "We have to change the mentality in this country. Culture is a national asset, our equivalent of oilfields or diamonds."

The 18th-century La Fenice — the "jewel of Europe" — burnt down in January 1996. Donations for reconstruction poured in. A construction firm owned by Fiat won the contract with a design by Gae Aulenti, perhaps best known for her conversion of the Musee D'Orsay in Paris. But a year ago the award was challenged by the runner-up German-Italian consortium and work has been at a standstill since last summer.

Signora Melandri is keen to promote Italian architecture and "other contemporary art forms" as well as restoring past glories. She says the country is uniquely placed to market itself as the world's centre of artistic excellence.

"New technology — the Internet, CD Roms, digital television — feeds off areas in which Italy excels, including sport, cinema, music and architecture as well as the fine arts and antiquities. I want the private and public sectors to exploit this huge potential through joint funding and joint management. I don't see any harm in developing the arts and making money out of them at the same time."

WORLD IN BRIEF

Japanese agree coalition deal

Tokyo: Japan's ruling party and an opposition group agreed to launch a coalition government yesterday after reaching a breakthrough in a dispute over security issues. The pact will help the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which lacks a majority in the upper chamber of parliament, to pass Bills to revive Japan's economy and upgrade defence ties with the US.

Keizo Obuchi, the Prime Minister, who returned yesterday from a tour of Europe, is expected to reshuffle and reduce the size of his Cabinet this afternoon and to give a post to his party's new ally, the Liberal Party. *(AP)*

Kabila troops 'kill 320'

Bangui: President Kabila's troops massacred at least 320 civilians last week in the northwestern Equateur province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, refugees in the Central African Republic said. They added that the provisional toll included 120 people slaughtered in Zongo and 200 at Libenge, on the border between the two countries. President Kabila's troops hold Zongo and Libenge. *(AFP)*

B25 and crew found

Jakarta: The remains of eight American airmen killed in a B25 bomber crash in what is now Indosesia's Irian Jaya province in the Second World War have been found after more than 50 years, the US Embassy said. The wreckage was spotted in December 1995 by a pilot and has now been identified by the US Army Central Identification Laboratory. *(AFP)*

Nine die on UN plane

Paris: None of the nine people on board a United Nations cargo aircraft survived when it crashed over an Angolan bat- tlefield on January 2, the rebel Unita group said. The Ango- lan Army claims Unita shot down both the Hercules C130 plane and a similar UN aircraft that crashed on December 26 over the central plateau territory, killing all 14 inside. *(AFP)*

Unmarried bliss

Sofia: At least 13,000 Bulgarian couples have been told they are not married after officials admitted that unqualified offi- cials had presided at their weddings, the paper *24 Tchassa* said. Two divorce petitions in the northern region of Rousse were rejected after officials noticed that the marriages had been improperly performed, the paper added. *(AFP)*

Britain ready to back lifting of UN oil embargo on Iraq

BY JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

BRITAIN, in a dramatic shift of policy in the aftermath of last month's Operation Desert Fox, appears ready to go along with a French proposal to lift the United Nations oil embargo on Iraq, provided adequate controls can be put on Iraq's ability to develop weapons of mass destruction.

British sources said yesterday that a trade-off was likely in the UN Security Council in coming months between relaxing the embargo imposed after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and instituting a strict new weapons inspection regime.

Meanwhile, US warplanes patrolling the no-fly zone over northern Iraq attacked several surface-to-air missile installations yesterday after being targeted by Iraqi radar, US officials said. Iraqis fired at least one missile but missed the aircraft, the Pentagon said. The incident underscored an increasingly aggressive Iraqi challenge to the no-fly zones enforced by US and British planes. President Saddam Hussein has nearly doubled his surface-to-air missile batteries and has been using them with increasing frequency to threaten allied pilots.

The UN's "oil for food" scheme, which allows Iraq to sell $5.2 billion (£3.16 billion) worth of crude every six months to finance humanitarian imports, could be extended without an upper limit, British officials say. That would, in effect, lift the crippling eight-year oil embargo, while leaving in place a UN system to monitor oil exports and authorised imports of food, medicine and other needed goods. Since Iraq cannot meet existing UN oil sales quotas because of the low price of crude, the practical effect would be small. But the political impact would be huge: Britain would be free of accusations that it is punishing the Iraqi people, while Iraq could claim success in ridding itself of the embargo.

France yesterday unveiled its proposal to lift the embargo and replace the UN Special Commission (Unscom) with an inspection regime that would monitor Iraq's weapons industries but no longer investigate its past efforts to acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. Britain's main objection appears to be that the mechanism would not ferret out existing stocks of chemical and biological weapons and Scud missiles.

Iraq's reaction remains unclear, the Iraqi leadership having refused to talk to the French Ambassador in Baghdad. Most of the Security Council are likely to embrace the proposals, fearing that a failure to make progress diplomatically could entail fresh military conflict.

☐ **The Hague:** Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, hinted yesterday that the UN weapons inspection team might have to accept some changes before returning, but insisted Baghdad should let them in.

Meanwhile, George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, said in Sofia that Saddam was making a "suicidal miscalculation" in continuing to target US and British warplanes.

US nuclear sanctions anger Primakov

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW



Primakov: says the US has threatened relations

RELATIONS between Russia and America, already strained by the Allied bombing of Iraq, took a turn for the worse yesterday when Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Prime Minister, lashed out at the US over its decision to impose sanctions on three Russian scientific institutions that it believes are helping the Iranian nuclear weapons programme.

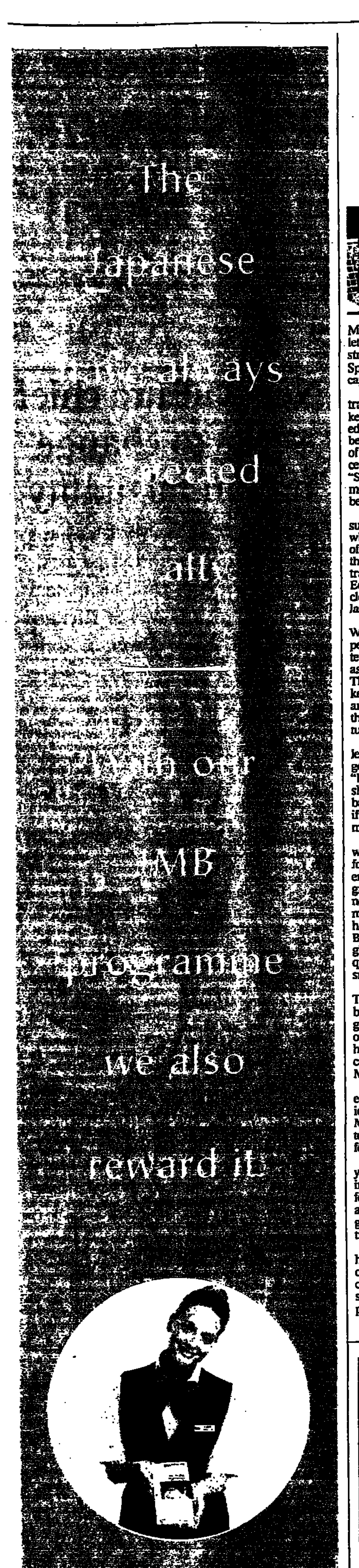
If the American accusations that Russia is providing nuclear assistance to Iran prove to be true, it would mean that Russia is contravening international agreements on nonproliferation.

The Russian Foreign Ministry, the Iranian Embassy in Moscow and all three institutions involved, the Moscow Aviation Institute, the Mendeleyev Chemical Technical University and the Scientific Research and Design Institute of Power and Technology, have dismissed the allegations.

Last July President Clinton imposed sanctions on seven other Russian bodies for the same reasons. Controls over the export of Russian technology have been tightened recently in order to meet international requirements.

"Such strong-arm methods are counter-productive for Russo-American relations, to which we attach great importance," Mr Primakov said, adding that he intended to raise the issue with Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, when she visits Moscow this month.

The three institutes involved in the affair said that their only contact with Iran was in the context of student exchanges, a claim backed by Igor Sergeyev, the Russian Defence Minister, who said that the three institutes lacked the necessary resources to transfer technology.



Nigerians seize Freetown from marauding killers



Most of the public buildings in the capital of Sierra Leone have been destroyed, reports Sam Kiley from Freetown

MACHINEGUN tracer bullets streaked down in a steady stream from *a hill overlooking* Spur Road in the Sierra Leone capital, Freetown.

Mercenary pilots on contract to the West African peacekeeping force, Ecomog, fidgeted nervously, opening cans of beer and swearing as the voice of an unknown Nigerian officer squealed over the radio: "Stop shooting from behind me, stop shooting from behind!"

In Freetown nobody is quite sure where the enemy is, or what he might look like. Much of the city has been razed to the ground after rebels infiltrated in civilian clothes and Ecomog uniforms and came close to taking over the capital last week.

"Spur Road? Spur Road? Where's that?" Neil Ellis, skipper of the mercenary helicopter known as "Bokkie", was asked. "That's our way home. These swine aren't going to keep me from a cold shower and a decent meal tonight," the South African soldier of fortune said.

A French colleague, "JJ", fingered his AK47. "I'm going to shoot my way back to the hotel if I have to," he muttered.

Such boasts were cold comfort to this reporter and a small group of Lebanese businessmen who had hitched a ride on Bokkie from Lungi airport to the defence headquarters as the sun set over the smoking ruins of Freetown.

> 'Someone has been teaching the rebels some pretty good tactics'

More shooting followed. Then a flare, and another, bathing the city in an orange glow. More angry voices came over the walkie-talkies. The harsh clatter of a firefight came from near Brigadier Maxwell Khobe's house.

Nigerian soldiers interrupted a loud and insistent evangelical service on the roof of the *Ministry of Defence* headquarters in Cockerill and rushed for their weapons.

"You open fire and I'll shoot you myself," yelled Mr Ellis into the darkness. Fred, a former British SAS sergeant and the helicopter's machine-gunner, rushed about the base trying to calm the Nigerians.

"They're just a little jumpy," he said. "The rebels are serious, very serious, and someone has been teaching them some pretty good tactics. They pop up all over the place."

We waited for another hour with ears tuned to the walkie-talkies. Nigerian soldiers *translated* Hausa transmissions, intended to thwart rebel eavesdropping.

"It's safe, sort of, to go," Mr Ellis said, his patience exhausted. Two cars were filled with the aircrews, toting an assortment of weapons. Passwords were given to all the occupants with the warning: "Don't get it wrong or we'll get one chance and then three RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades)."

Donning a flak jacket, I sat in the middle of the car and inexplicably pressed my hand against the top of my head, hoping to deflect a high-powered round from my brains.

The cars raced off, swung quickly into Spur Road and along the beach drive to the Cape Sierra Hotel. The air stank of death.

"There are a couple of dead mercenaries, white guys working for the rebels, stinking up the beech. Better get them cleared up in the morning," someone said.

The dead mercenaries and three others, including Italians and Ukrainians captured in Freetown, have added a sinister dimension to Sierra Leone's civil war. Until last week, the rebels, members of Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front, former government soldiers, and thousands of Liberians sent to fight by President Taylor of Liberia, were as terrifying in their brutality as they were useless at warfare.

Now the rebels have forced the West African peacekeepers to reinforce Freetown with hundreds of fresh troops, all ferried in on Bokkie, Ecomog's only helicopter, after a week of savage fighting.

Bloated bodies lay rotting in the centre of the city. Scores of others, identified by Nigerian officers as "dead rebels", have been washed up on the city's beaches.

Central Freetown is an apocalyptic vision. The destruction is the result of an attack by rebels, backed by up to 300 mercenaries and with as yet mysterious financial support.

The rebel leader, Sam Bockarie, a close friend of President Taylor, vowed to burn the city if Ecomog fought back. Retreating to the east, where fighting continues, he has made good his pledge. The Post Office, parliament, high court — every government building — has been burnt.



Nigerian troops of the Ecomog intervention force board a lorry in Freetown on their way to fight the rebels

"Men came to our house and demanded food," said a sobbing woman of 25 who refused to give her name for fear of retribution. "They said we should support them. We said we were democrats, so they dragged us out and burnt our home. We were lucky; many of our neighbours were murdered for just being around."

Ecomog forced a junta of officers and Revolutionary United Front leaders from power a year ago after nine months of bloody rule. Taken off guard by the rebel attack last week, Ecomog has slowly regained the upper hand and Major-General Timothy Shelpidi, the Nigerian Ecomog commander, said yesterday that Freetown would be "safe, hopefully, by the weekend".

But the rest of Sierra Leone remains a playground for the psychopathic rebels who have spent most of the past year retraining, rearming and chopping off the limbs of villagers in government-held areas.

The rebels may be leaving Freetown, but Ecomog is convinced that many will stay behind and melt into the jungle-covered hills overlooking the capital, from where their attacks were launched.

As a result, Ecomog trusts nobody. Its troops eye each other suspiciously. The narrow streets of the harbourside city echo to the sounds of weapons cocking as comrades approach each other, fearfully exchanging passwords.

At the headquarters of the Nigerian contingent, a handful of Sierra Leone soldiers, a select bunch of those who can be trusted, lounged in the back of their pick-up truck enjoying the sea breeze.

A couple of fishermen floated into view, dragging on their nets. Small dugout boats have been used to ferry arms to rebel infiltrators, so a Nigerian major fired two rounds across their bows.

He went back to his lunch as a breathless warrant officer rushed over to assure him that the fishermen were genuine.

NET LINKS

www.sierra-leone.org/ — Sierra Leone news, photographs and links.
www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1998/AFR/15102298.htm — Amnesty International Report on Sierra Leone, November 1998.
www.hrw.org/reports98/sierra/ — Human Rights Watch report.

Mugabe forced into U-turn on white farms

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

PRESIDENT MUGABE of Zimbabwe has been forced by the International Monetary Fund to retract plans for a mass confiscation of white-owned farms.

In the next few days, the Government is to place a statement in international newspapers committing itself to a land reform programme that will be run under the rule of law, is transparent and will not destroy the commercial farming sector. The statement is meant to restore international confidence in Zimbabwe.

It will have to resolve all the confusion and collapse of farmers' morale caused by the provisional seizure last November of 841 farms, and Mr Mugabe's assertion last week that farmers will be paid "with an IOU". The agreement was reached in negotiations here over the last week between the IMF and the Government.

But sources said yesterday that the IMF had made clear to Mr Mugabe that if he strays from his undertakings in the statement the freeze on international concessional finance, that has run for nearly four years, will go on.

Diplomats are hoping that the latest round of talks will end the President's habit of making promises to effect an orderly, legal land reform process and then vowing revolutionary retribution against white farms in the next breath. Mr Mugabe has kept up the game since late 1997 when he had 1,500 commercial farms listed for nationalisation, with only partial compensation for the owners.

The economy is in its most desperate state since independence in 1980, mostly as a result of reckless political manoeuvres by the now very unpopular President. The Zimbabwean dollar fell to its lowest level yesterday, and stockbrokers said the stock exchange might have to stop trading next week after the introduction on Tuesday of taxes on all stock market transactions.

The IMF holds the key to steadying the economic collapse with a $176 million (£106 million) loan which, if approved, will unlock another $800 million from the rest of the international community, and talks for much more. "We will recommend that we go ahead with the standby [loan]," Goodall Gondwe, the head of the IMF's Africa department, said on Tuesday at the end of the negotiations.

He said the Government had promised that, over the next two years, it will buy only 118 farms that have been offered to it for resettlement.

Journalist goes into hiding from police

Harare: An independent newspaper's reporter was in hiding from military police yesterday as his editor prepared to spend a second night under illegal detention in a military barracks here (Jan Raath writes).

Nine military police also threatened to arrest the proprietor of the weekly *Standard* over its reports by the journalist, Ray Choto, at the weekend that 23 soldiers, including seven officers, had *been in jail since mid-December* for urging fellow soldiers to overthrow President Mugabe. But the police beat a hasty retreat late yesterday afternoon as a contingent of about 20 foreign and local journalists arrived at the *Standard* offices. "They are breaking every damned rule in the book," said Clive Wilson, aged 62, the proprietor. "The military is in the ascendancy because of the Congo war, and it's gung ho, let's go for these people. This is kidnapping."

Mark Chavunduka, the editor, spent a second day in a military barracks where Mr *Wilson said he was "under severe* psychological pressure". A member of staff saw him and said his eyes were red and his face was swollen.

UPALI ATURUGIRI / AFP



Judge Augustine Paul leaves court yesterday after allowing amendments to charges against the former Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim

Prosecutors change tack in case against Anwar

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN KUALA LUMPUR

CHARGES of corruption against the ousted Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, were amended yesterday, shifting the emphasis from sexual misconduct to abuse of power, as defence lawyers threatened to call the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, to give evidence.

Mr Anwar, the former Finance Minister, who has alleged he is the victim of a political conspiracy, claimed the prosecution was making the amendments because it could not prove the charges. "Whatever the prosecution may say to try to explain the amendments to the charges at this late stage, the truth is crystal clear . . . Anwar will be vindicated," he said.

Mr Anwar, 51, is on trial on four counts of corruption for allegedly using his position to order police to quash charges of sexual misconduct made against him by his former driver and the sister of his former private secretary.

The amended charges state that to save himself from embarrassment Mr Anwar directed police to obtain denials from Mr Azizan and Ms Ummi of sodomy allegations.

"The major change, if any, refers to sexual misconduct and sodomy, which on the reading of the [old] charges, is not really a substantive element to be proved," Judge Augustine Paul said.

The changes mean the prosecution will not have to prove that Mr Anwar did indeed have an affair or commit sodomy, but only that he used his position to influence the police to quash the investigation.

The surprise move came as the prosecution wrapped up its case in the eleventh week of the trial, with both sides set to summarise the evidence today, starting with the defence.

The defence is expected to argue that the case should be dismissed, but if the judge rules there is a case to answer, it will then begin to call witnesses, including Dr Mahathir.

Leading article, page 21



Barak: his adviser raided

'Watergate' theft of file infuriates Israeli Opposition

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

A SCANDAL dubbed "Israel's Watergate" erupted yesterday over a mysterious break-in at the Washington offices of a US pollster advising Ehud Barak, the Labour Opposition's challenger to Binyamin Netanyahu in the May 17 election.

Labour members of the Knesset said that supporters of Mr Netanyahu's Likud Party were behind the burglary and Avi Yehezkel, a backbencher, called on the police to join their US counterparts in the investigation. Another Labour politician, Ophir Pines, called on Mr Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, to state that the right-wing Likud had had no part in the Washington burglary, which US detectives said had been carried out by professionals.

Even before any hard evidence emerged, conspiracy theories were quick to sweep through Israel's corridors of power.

Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, a former Labour Cabinet minister, asked his Israeli Army radio interviewer: "Who has an interest? Do the Americans? The French? The Arabs? What are we dealing with? We are dealing with an election campaign and information that any political adversary has an interest in."

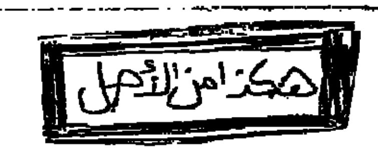
Sergeant Joe Gentile, of the Washington police, said that during the night between Monday and Tuesday thieves entered the offices of Stanley Greenberg, the American polls expert commissioned to work for Mr Barak and Labour. Sergeant Gentile said that police and the FBI were investigating the possibility that "certain records were targeted", but he gave no details.

Tal Silberstein, who is managing Mr Barak's electoral campiagn, said that the thieves "knew exactly what they wanted because the only file taken was the one dealing with the Israeli campaign".

He told Israeli radio that the file contained information about Mr Barak's bank accounts and assets, but denied that the stolen information related to the party's election strategy, as some Israeli sources had said. Mr Silberstein claimed that an unnamed Jewish group was responsible for the robbery.

Mr Greenberg, who did key polling work for President Clinton during the 1992 presidential campaign, has several international clients, including President Mandela.

Aliz Goren, Mr Barak's spokeswoman, said that it was necessary to wait for the conclusion of the US investigation and that it was a mistake immediately to blame Likud.



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SEE THE BACK PAGE OF SECTION ONE FOR TODAY'S TOKEN

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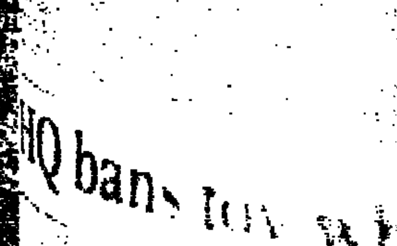
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Clinton's team pushes Senate for speedy trial

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

LAWYERS for President Clinton's lawyers filed a 130-page brief yesterday fiercely rebutting, point by point, the "unwise and unwarranted" impeachment case against him.

Breaking weeks of silence on the saga, Mr Clinton said yesterday "the important thing for me is to spend as little time as possible" thinking about the Senate trial, which resumes today. "The brief speaks for itself," Mr Clinton said, adding that he trusted senators to do their job. "Meanwhile, I need to work on the business of the people."

In the brief, Mr Clinton's lawyers call on the Senate not to summon witnesses. They give a warning that, if witnesses are called, the trial will be prolonged by months because the President would insist on his right to take pre-trial depositions from them. They also mount a separate, fierce political argument against the case brought by the House of Representatives, saying that "from the beginning to end the House process was both partisan and unfair".

They argue that removing Mr Clinton from office would thwart the will of those who elected him. "Removing the President on these facts would substantially alter the delicate constitutional balance and move us closer to a quasi-parliamentary system, in which the President is elected to office by the choice of the people, but continues in office only at the pleasure of Congress," they said.

Behind the scenes of today's formal procedings, a fresh argument is brewing over the "outing" of the private lives of Republicans by Larry Flynt, owner of *Hustler* magazine. Conservatives are accusing Mr Flynt of waging a campaign to help Mr Clinton.

The conservative *Washington Times* quoted yesterday Dan Moldea, an investigator described as working closely with Mr Flynt on the exposés, as offering to keep embarrassing personal details secret if members of Congress held back from attacking the President. Mr Moldea said that his orders from Mr Flynt were "to deal with hypocrisy" and that if a Republican "hasn't been shooting his mouth off, we let him go".

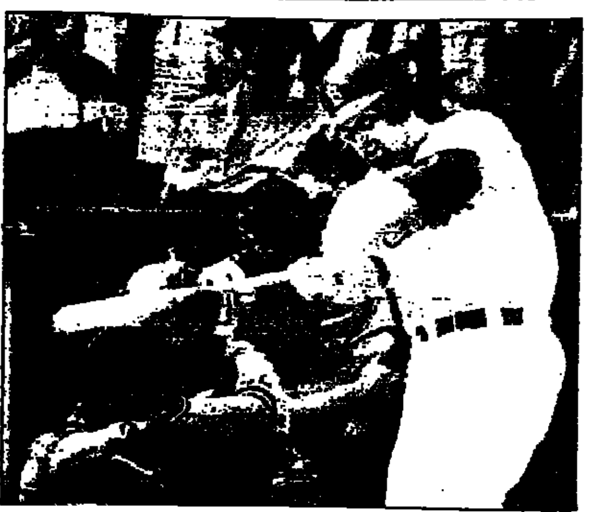
The President, maintaining a carefully unruffled demeanour, gave a strong hint that he has no plans to postpone the annual State of the Union speech, scheduled for January 19, saying: "We have to deal with the problems of America, the opportunities of America, and that's what I intend to do with the State of the Union speech." The White House is also holding to plans for the President to meet the Pope this month, days after the Senate will decide whether to throw out the impeachment case or to go for a long trial. The White House insisted this week that the encounter between the President and the Pope, set for January 26, was planned long before the trial timetable was known.

Mr Clinton and his wife, Hillary, comfortably beat the Pope in Gallup's 1998 "most admired" poll. He was named by nearly a fifth of those polled, sharply up on the year before, and Mrs Clinton's rating doubled to 28 per cent. The Pope and Oprah Winfrey were the runners-up.

In a further sign of the President's combative mood, he has made a new push to have James Hormel, a gay philanthropist from San Francisco, made Ambassador to Luxembourg. The nomination of Mr Hormel, a former Dean at the University of Chicago law school, won support from both parties in the Senate. It was even approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, chaired by Jesse Helms, an arch-conservative. But it was scuppered by Trent Lott, the Senate Majority Leader, who refused to allow a vote after describing homosexuals as sinners who should struggle to overcome the "blight".

Letters, page 21


Phil Ozersky pictured with the record-beating baseball in New York yesterday


McGwire sending his 70th home run into the crowd

Record $3m pitch for $10 baseball

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE $10 baseball that Mark McGwire slugged out of the ground for an unprecedented 70th home-run in a single season set a second record when it fetched $3 million (£1.8 million) at auction in New York.

The ball was put on sale at Guernsey's auction house by Philip Ozersky, a poorly paid research scientist who fulfilled every American schoolboy's dream when he caught the ball in the crowd at McGwire's home ground in St Louis on September 27.

The price, $2.7 million plus commission, walloped the previous record of $126,500 set last November by the ball that gave the legendary Babe Ruth his first home-run for the New York Yankees.

"I never caught a ball before, and I probably never will again," Mr Ozersky said. "It's pretty inconceivable to know what a million dollars is. It's really strange to have all those zeroes. Now I have a big bank account."

Mr Ozersky, who earns $30,000 a year mapping human genes, said he would donate some of the money to a cancer charity. His accountant is still working out how much income tax he will have to pay.

The ball became a symbol of a revival in America's national pastime in a season that saw a home-run race between McGwire of the St Louis Cardinals and Sammy Sosa of the Chicago Cubs, who came in as the runner-up with 66 home-runs in a single season. The previous record of 61 was set by Roger Maris in 1961.

McGwire's record-breaking ball went to an anonymous telephone bidder who described himself as "one heck of a baseball fan".

Chunk of $850,000 payout to Paula Jones is from Hillary's savings

Lawyers stake first claim on trust cash, writes Ian Brodie in Washington

A HEFTY cheque from President Clinton, which was in the mail to Paula Jones yesterday to settle her sexual harassment case, was drawn in part from family savings earned by his wife, Hillary.

It was not clear just how much Mrs Jones would collect from the presidential pay-out of $850,000 (£520,000). Her former lawyers have placed a lien — or first claim — on it all.

In settling, Mr Clinton did not admit that he dropped his trousers and asked Mrs Jones for oral sex when he was Governor of Arkansas and she was a state employee.

But it was from Mrs Jones's allegation, and his failure to settle it earlier, that her lawyers uncovered his relationship with Monica Lewinsky and set off the sex-and-lies scandal that has led to his impeachment trial, which starts today in the US Senate.

The money for Mrs Jones was sent just in time to meet a deadline set in November when Mr Clinton agreed to settle after being told by advisers that the sum would not come out of his own pocket. It turned out to be bad advice. His lawyers discovered they could not raid his legal defence fund, to which Clinton supporters have contributed, because it is restricted by charter to paying only lawyers' fees and expenses.

The Clintons were forced to take $375,000 for Mrs Jones out of a "blind trust" — run without the couple knowing how the money is invested — containing their savings and run by an investment company. The trust is listed on the couple's disclosure forms as worth between $1 million and $5 million, although aides said it was close to the lower figure.

Although Mr and Mrs Clinton have joint finances, most of their personal money comes from her high-earning years as a lawyer when his salary was only $35,000 a year as Governor of Arkansas. By one account, the blind trust is in Mrs Clinton's name.

While it must have been painful for the Clintons to shell out so heavily from their savings for Mrs Jones, they also face legal bills expected to reach $10 million from the Jones, Lewinsky, Whitewater and other legal tangles. They hope their legal defence fund will come, at least in part, to the rescue, although donations are thought to have slowed since Mr Clinton admitted his relationship with Ms Lewinsky.

The remaining $475,000 for Mrs Jones came from a deal with Chubb insurance company, which agreed to buy out its personal liability policy with the President. His lawyers were unsuccessful in reaching a similar arrangement with his other insurers, State Farm. A split of the $850,000 worked out by Mrs Jones and her lawyers would give her $510,000 and them $320,000, with a paltry $20,000 going to her two former lawyers. She fell out with them when they were on the brink of settling with Mr Clinton for $700,000. As well as their lien, the two have filed a court motion claiming they are owed $874,000.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth Ward Gracen, a former Miss America who admitted having sex once with Mr Clinton 15 years ago, has complained of intimidation. Her lawyer said she was being hounded about her taxes just weeks after an anonymous caller said she would be audited by the Internal Revenue Service unless she kept quiet. The audit threat came from the same caller who told her she was about to receive a subpoena in the Paula Jones case and should get out of town, her lawyer said.

Other women linked to Mr Clinton have complained of intimidation. Mrs Jones was audited by the IRS after she rejected his first offer. White House aides have always denied any conspiracy to intimidate or discredit the women.

Hollywood plans tribute to stars of its golden years

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THEY must be dead or old to qualify, but the century's 50 greatest film stars are to be selected by the American Film Institute and given a last hurrah at a marathon televised gala this year. Greta Garbo and Lord Olivier are on the long "shortlist" of 500 actors being circulated by the institute to Hollywood's film luminaries for their votes.

Sir Anthony Hopkins and Jane Fonda are out of the running, despite their Oscars, because of a ruling that candidates must have begun their career by 1950 to be eligible. The result may attract controversy or simply derision. Recent stars will be considered only if they have died, leaving a "completed body of work," a spokesman said.

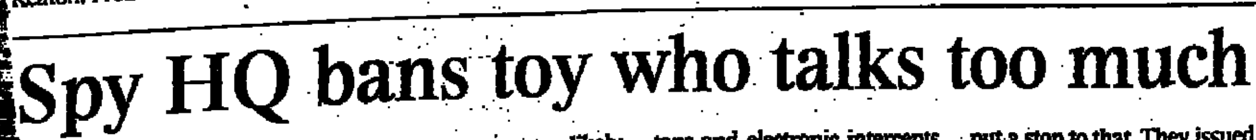
The pool of contenders thus includes John Belushi, best-known for *National Lampoon's Animal House* and for dying from an overdose, but not Meryl Streep or Dustin Hoffman. "Agenda-setting is of the highest order and we are very proud of that," Tom Pollock, the institute chairman, said.

His last agenda was a list of the top 100 films of the century that was led by *Citizen Kane* and *Casablanca* but was rubbished by critics for leaving out the entire *oeuvres* of Buster Keaton, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. That list served its main purpose of focusing attention on films' quality rather than their box-office performance, Mr Pollock said. It also raised badly needed money for an institute founded to preserve America's film heritage but reeling from cuts in state funding.

The gala at which the stars' names will be revealed is likewise a fundraiser, with CBS paying an undisclosed fee for the broadcast rights and 50 contemporary actors being enlisted to introduce their forebears. Having made their debuts in 1950, Marlon Brando and Sophia Loren are on the shortlist to be voted on by 1,800 experts receiving their ballot papers this week. So are Sidney Poitier, Spencer Tracy, Bette Davis and dozens of all-but forgotten legends of yesteryear, including Gilbert "Bronco Billy" Anderson, who first appeared on film in 1903.

James Dean, Grace Kelly and Steve McQueen are all candidates, being dead. The list of 50, consisting of 25 men and 25 women, promises to enthrall the elderly but draw protest from baby-boomers.


Humphrey Bogart with Katharine Hepburn in *The African Queen*, top, the Laurel and Hardy comedy team and, right, Lucille Ball, all figure in the list



Spy HQ bans toy who talks too much


Furby alert: those ears could overhear secrets

FURBY seems an unlikely spy, with owl-like features and tufts of hair between pink ears (writes Ian Brodie in Washington).

But having eluded thousands of American parents, who have scoured the toyshops, Furby emerged yesterday as a national security risk. He has been banned from the super-secret headquarters of the US National Security Agency in Maryland.

Unofficially known as the Puzzle Palace, the HQ is America's biggest espionage entity. It analyses telephone taps and electronic intercepts picked up from around the world.

Furby is a cyberpet with a computer chip that enables him to, gosh, repeat what he has heard. Why, in no time Furby could be blabbing all over the place about the latest eavesdropping of, say, President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Officials were worried that people would take Furbys home and "they'd start talking classified", according to a Capitol Hill source who monitors the intelligence community.

Puzzle Palace guards have put a stop to that. They issued a stern "Furby Alert" on the spy agency's inter-office Internet. It said: "Personally owned photographic, video and audio recording equipment are prohibited items. This includes toys, such as Furbys with built-in recorders that repeat the audio with synthesised sound to mimic the original signal."

Anyone who brought a Furby to work was ordered to contact a security officer about what to do. The threat: Furby utters 200 words — 100 in English and 100 in "Furbish".

Follow the lead of the famous



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on prostate cancer: its symptoms, advances in treatment, and their success rate

Hyacinth Bucket in the television series *Keeping Up Appearances* found the presence of her ageing lager-lout brother-in-law, Onslow, a constant impediment in her battle to maintain middle-class respectability. Unshaven Onslow seemed to spend much of his time wearing a vest, lying on a grubby bed and drinking cans of beer; he didn't appear to be contributing much to society.

Geoffrey Hughes, the real-life Onslow, has redressed the balance. His advocacy of measures for the early diagnosis of cancer of the prostate may save many of the 10,000 men who die from it each year, and help to bring British figures more in line with those recorded in the rest of the developed world.

Hughes has described how he attended a routine medical examination at which a trace of blood was found in his urine; apart from this he had no symptoms and the bleeding would not have been obvious without tests. Further examination — blood tests, prostatic ultrasound and biopsy — confirmed the presence of prostatic cancer. The good news is that MRI scans, bone scans, and the rest of the pre-surgical regime showed that the cancer had not spread.

As Hughes was, in prostatic surgical terms, young — only 54 — and in sufficiently good order to withstand surgery, he opted for a radical prostatectomy, the total removal of the prostate and adjacent tissue. He was up and about within 72 hours and after a holiday in Australia feels fine — and has every intention of being around for many years.

Hughes is not the only star who has publicised the advantage of early diagnosis. When the ever exuberant Sir Harry Secombe had his usual medical check-up, his doctor didn't care for the feel of his prostate. The blood test — the PSA (prostate specific antigen), which distinguishes between the benign and malignant enlargement of this gland — together with a biopsy vindicated his doctor's opinion.

> Cancer of the prostate is an insidious disease

Sir Harry's scans, too, showed no evidence of the spread of the tumour but as he is older, and has had other medical problems, he and his doctors decided on treatment with a combination of hormone therapy and radiotherapy.

Hormones are given first to reduce the size of the tumour before radiotherapy is started, thereby lessening side-effects and increasing efficacy. Sir Harry, like Hughes, also has an excellent chance, on average above 75 to 80 per cent, of having no further trouble from his cancer.

The third public figure to extol the benefits of early diagnosis of cancer of the prostate is Major Ron Ferguson who has also, apparently, made a good recovery.

Both Hughes and Sir Harry were symptom-free when they attended routine medicals. Their cancer was found because of tests carried out by the doctor, not because the patients were suffering from ill-health.

Cancer of the prostate is an insidious disease: by the time it causes symptoms, which disturb the patient, there is a 50 per cent chance that it will already have spread beyond the confines of the gland, and the likelihood of a lasting cure is remote.

Patients who, for some reason, do not have regular PSA blood tests should watch for symptoms that could foretell the need for urgent intervention. These include trouble with passing water, possibly a weakened flow, and urgency. There may be pain on ejaculation and blood in the urine or semen, potency may be less and the semen volume may be consistently reduced. In advanced cases, there will be pain from the spread of the tumour to the spine, ribs or other bones.



Many public figures, such as Major Ron Ferguson, extol the benefits of early diagnosis of prostate cancer

IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DETECTION

DR RICHARD COWAN, an oncologist specialising in prostatic cancer at the Christie Hospital in Manchester, said recently that when he attends conferences overseas, colleagues are astounded that 90 per cent of British cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed only at a late stage, when the men already have symptoms, compared with less than 20 per cent of patients in the rest of the developed world.

Dr Cowan is not surprised at the considerable variation in the likelihood of survival across Europe. Statistics in the *European Journal of Cancer* show that in Switzerland 72 per cent of men diagnosed as having the cancer are likely to be alive in five years. In Germany the figure is 67 per cent. At the other end of the spectrum the UK, with a 45 per cent survival rate, joins East European countries at the bottom of the table, below Slovakia and just above Slovenia and Estonia.

> The UK survival rate ranks with those of Eastern Europe

Denmark has similar figures to the UK, which the Eurocare Working Group attributes to "a rather reserved attitude of Danish physicians that seems to result in limited diagnosis of asymptomatic cases".

The group concludes that there are many causes for the variable results, but that the approach to diagnosis — as well as differences in treatment — play a part. America has very good results: 83 per cent of patients survive for five years. If the UK survival rate is to improve, there are three possible approaches: to prevent prostate cancer, diagnose it earlier or improve treatment, particularly in advanced cases. Though it is a disease of affluence, any direct relationship to diet is hard to show. But there is evidence that selenium, a trace element, and lycopene, a polyphenol found in tomatoes, significantly reduce the incidence. (Urologists can be seen surreptitiously taking selenium tablets and drinking tomato juice, with or without vodka, rather than gin and tonic.)

Early detection relies on two tests. A simple rectal examination, which reveals something over half of all tumours (this is how Sir Harry Secombe's was found) and the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test. In the US, where 70 per cent of men can quote their PSA level, there has been a 6.9 per cent reduction in such cancer deaths. In Britain there has sometimes been a reluctance to encourage testing, even though the death rate is rising alarmingly, and the vast majority of urologists now recommend a PSA test.

Many doctors believe the PSA test is a crucial part of a middle-aged man's annual check-up, and for those over 40 if there is a family history of the disease. To judge from American and Canadian figures, early diagnosis saves lives; if a prostatic tumour goes undiagnosed, a man loses on average 7.2 years of his expected life span.

CHLAMYDIA IS A FACTOR IN PROSTATE PROBLEMS

IT IS not only in old age that prostates cause trouble. The number of young patients with chronic inflammation of the prostate is increasing.

The *International Journal of Clinical Practice* recently reported on a survey designed to determine what proportion of patients with chronic prostatitis (inflammation) in which no bacteria could be demonstrated were, in fact, suffering from a chlamydial infection.

Chlamydia is the organism that causes NSU (non-specific urethritis) — one of the causes of the gleet (discharge) which so worried the 17th-century diarist Samuel Pepys — in men and much of the pelvic inflammatory disease, and hence infertility, in women.

Acute or chronic prostatitis in men causes pain or discomfort on passing urine, or ejaculating, a perineal ache and often back pain. Prostatitis is frequently associated with a urethral discharge and the examination of patients includes urethral tests carried out in the morning before urine is passed; in this particular survey, those patients who had an associated urethritis were excluded.

Prostatic fluid is collected by prostatic massage — a rather undignified and uncomfortable procedure — but one that enables a doctor to examine the fluid and check it for bacteria. More than 25 per cent of the men who had non-bacterial prostatitis could be shown to be suffering from chlamydia.

They were treated with 100mg of Doxycycline twice daily for 10 days, with a cure rate of 80 per cent. This dosage is rather lower than that used at the Royal London Hospital which, when I was there, administered 300mg of the same antibiotic for three weeks.

One condition frequently mistaken for prostatitis is loin and groin pain, which results from nerve-root irritation, often from a prolapsed disc of the sciatic plexus in the back. This, too, gives rise to chronic pain in the genitalia, perineum, groin and inner thighs.

Vaccine therapy trial begins

IF SURVIVAL times for cancer of the prostate are to be prolonged, a means will have to be found to extend the life of those patients who no longer respond to hormone therapy. One such research project is under way at St George's Hospital Medical School in London.

The first four patients have been enrolled at St George's for a trial of vaccine therapy for patients with advanced cancer of the prostate. It will be conducted by Roger Kirby, a consultant urologist at the hospital. Up to 60 local patients will join the trial, all of whom will have ceased to respond to hormone therapy and will have a rising PSA of at least 30 — the normal upper limit is four.

Treatment involves injection of prostatic cancer cells, which have been inactivated by radiation, so that they are quite harmless. The cells are combined with a vaccine adjuvant SRL 172, which has been developed by SRL Pharma. The role of the adjuvant is to stimulate the patient's immune system so that it produces the optimum response required to destroy the cancer. The cellular material is provided by Onyvax, a biotechnology company based at St George's, which has already worked with Angus Dalgleish, an oncologist at the hospital.

Experimental preclinical trials with the vaccine and adjuvant suggest that the treatment will provide a significant lengthening of the patient's survival time. The system is, to some extent, based on earlier research done by Professor Dalgleish who has been working on a vaccine adjuvant therapy for malignant melanoma with most encouraging results. There has been a fourfold increase in the likelihood of treated patients surviving for five years. Research trial telephone number: 0181-682 9494.

● *There will be an all-day meeting*, Shaping the Future of Prostate Cancer, *at the Royal Society, organised by the Prostate Cancer Charity on Monday, March 29, 1999. Inquiries: 0181-383 8124.*

When symptoms are benign

THE GOOD news is that the overwhelming majority of prostatic problems are benign.

Even better news is that whereas a few years ago any significant benign enlargement of the prostate was treated with surgery, now medical management with pills is an acceptable alternative in many early cases.

Nonetheless, surgery, TURP (*transurethral resection of the prostate*), a coring of the prostate as if it was an apple, is so routine that I have had patients who have returned to work within days.

The doctor asks a patient three questions: do you have to get up at night to pass urine? Is the flow slower than it used to be? Do you have any other bladder symptoms?

The symptoms of an enlarged prostate — benign prostatic hyperplasia — are divided into those caused by *obstruction to the flow of urine away* from the bladder and those caused by *irritation of the bladder and urethral lining.*

The prostate, a gland which secretes semen, surrounds the urethra, the tube leading away from the bladder. As the prostatic gland enlarges with age — as it inevitably does — it constricts the urethra in the same way as would tightening a jubilee clip around the hose leading to a car radiator.

Classic symptoms of obstruction are a poor, intermittent stream, leaving a man standing in the loo while his colleagues are back at the bar.

THIS IS often coupled with a feeling of incomplete emptying. When there is *complete obstruction, the condition is* called acute retention. A feeble stream *and incomplete emptying suggest that* surgery may soon be needed.

The symptoms of irritation of the urethra and bladder are frequency, urgency, a need to get up at night and leaking on the way to the lavatory. This latter symptom is also indicative that surgery is needed.

هكذا من الأصل

Cross, crusty, gentle and tough

BASIL HUME *by his friends*



Defender of his faith: Ann Widdecombe says that after a private meeting with Basil Hume lasting just 15 minutes, her spiritual doubts of a lifetime were overcome

He can be enigmatic, irritable and stubborn — yet the leader of England's Roman Catholics is a man of true holiness who inspires a deep love. In the first of a series of extracts from a new book by his friends, Ann Widdecombe reveals the human side of Cardinal Basil Hume

In November 1992 the Roman Catholic Church in Britain faced one of the biggest challenges in its post-Reformation history. The Church of England decided to ordain women and in the process rent itself asunder. A mass exodus followed, mainly of the Anglo-Catholic wing, and largely presented itself for reception into the Catholic Church.

The Church was hopelessly ill-prepared and Cardinal Basil Hume was faced with a diplomatic and organisational nightmare. Having publicly commented that this might be the opportunity for the reconversion of England for which we had all been praying for so long he later, uncharacteristically, made a partial retraction of the word "reconversion". Many of us thought there was no need for any retraction whatsoever. Indeed, it was that very commitment to the reconversion of England which spurred him to find a solution to what was becoming known in the Catholic Church as the "Anglican problem". He preferred to see it as the "Anglican opportunity". Perhaps, also, he saw a solution to the shrinkage of vocations in the Catholic Church.

Whatever his thoughts, it is one of Cardinal Hume's greatest achievements that the transition of Anglicans to Rome was managed without detriment either to his own Church or to long-term relations with a decidedly embarrassed and not over-gracious Canterbury. It was managed, furthermore, despite a considerable amount of resistance from the Catholic Church in England and a high degree of frustration on the part of crossing Anglicans who could not, in turn, understand the obstacles being put in their way.

Early reaction was chaotic. Some Catholic bishops gave an instant welcome to the dozens of Anglican clergy who came to see them, others repulsed them with stories of seven-year preparation periods. Some laity were received in a matter of weeks (I was myself) while others, sturdy Anglo-Catholics who were almost more Roman than those receiving them, ran into demands to take the whole RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) course, which often turned out to be run by people unequipped to deal with such pupils and wholly ignorant of what they already believed.

"Why do they keep talking about conversion as if we have only just put our totem poles in the dustbin?" one lady wrote to me at the time. Why indeed!

We can thank the cardinal and a small number of other determined bishops that the mess was so thoroughly sorted from so hopeless a beginning. Scores of vicars, most of whom were still ministering in the Church of England, regularly made their way down Ambrosden Avenue to attend Basil Hume's Wednesday evening talks and many of them were subsequently received into the Catholic Church by the cardinal's ecumenical adviser, Father Michael Seed. My own spiritual journey was also completed by the cardinal. When I left the Church of England in November 1992 it was to find myself in denominational no man's land. I knew what I was rejecting, but not what I was going to.

For many years I had been attracted by the Roman Catholic Church, with its cohesion and its uncompromising stand in the face of fashionable scorn on moral issues such as abortion and divorce. I could not, however, ignore the very profound doctrinal reservations which lay between myself and reception into the Church. All received — as opposed to cradle — Catholics have to state that they believe everything the Church teaches to be revealed truth. I did not.

After endless conversations with Michael Seed, I had resolved many but not all of these reservations. In this unhappy state I was facing an Easter still out of communion with any Church. As it happened, so were thousands of other Anglicans and it was on their behalf that I went to see the cardinal. In a quarter of an hour he removed the doubts of a lifetime. The exact content of the conversation will be forever private but it revolved around the nature of doubt and understanding. It is a pity that the cardinal cannot personally counsel 55 million people, for if he could then he would guarantee that longed-for reconversion of England.

He appears little in the media, which is doubtless why he is listened to with respect when he does; interviewers do not adopt towards him the hectoring tone often discernible with Anglican bishops.

Cardinal Hume can be cross and crusty, gentle and endearing, tough and uncompromising, sensitive and diplomatic. He hates rows. Perhaps, sometimes, he hates them too much. He can be too keen to preserve the tranquillity of the Church when it might be better served by a resignation or two.

He is dignified in the face of attack. On one occasion he stood quietly by the altar, keeping the whole cathedral in silence, the Mass suspended, until the police came to remove a group of demonstrating homosexuals. A prolonged demonstration outside the cathedral, which lasted several weeks, of a handful of Catholics supporting the ordination of women, drew a raised eyebrow but no comment.

Those who know him say his attitude to George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, verges on the contemptuous in private, but no trace of this has ever been publicly discernible. Relations between the two denominations appear to have weathered the storm, even if the sharp reduction in the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England, following the loss of so many to Rome, has left them less in tune with each other. In fact, the cardinal recognises that basic faith and traditional values are best upheld not only by the remaining Anglo-Catholics, but also by the Evangelicals. He has long been an admirer of Billy Graham, attending his last mission to England for some hours.

There is more than one way for secularism to win and the cardinal fights it well in its more recognisable forms. He said bluntly, for example, that Britain could no longer call itself a Christian country when Parliament voted to extend abortion up to birth and to remove the protection of the Infant Life Preservation Act from abortion legislation. He also proclaimed, equally bluntly, that no Roman Catholic was free to dissent from Evangelium Vitae, the papal encyclical on the sanctity of life. Yet he has not been prepared to go as far as Cardinal Winning and make it a defining issue in political choice.

If he can use a blunt instrument when fighting for some causes, Cardinal Hume leads by example when promoting others. His persistent interest in homelessness and the relief of poverty is well known, less so his interest in youth crime. Yet he makes his point on both elegantly, rather than emphatically, by encouraging the Church to address the issues directly, as opposed merely to berating politicians for their supposed failures. It is a style which might have given some other much-quoted churchmen greater gravitas had they seen fit to adopt it. It also has the virtue of increasing the pressure on politicians in a way that direct attacks do not.

A prophet is not without honour except in his own country, but it rare to hear Cardinal Hume criticised by ordinary members of the Church or by his own priests, other than by those who have special axes to grind. Most refer to him with personal liking, the laity talking of him with a mixture of awe and affection, his priests with an element of teasing in their respect. Even those liberals who are exasperated with his unyielding traditionalism will often still mutter grudging compliments.

It is no mean feat, in an age where destructive comment is the order of the day, to have inspired and retained respect over nearly a quarter of a century from politicians of all hues, a cynical press and media, the leaders of other denominations and, indeed, other religions, the monarch and his Church. It boils down to a recognition of true holiness, of a man in touch with God.

● Basil Hume: By His Friends, *edited by Carolyn Butler, Fount Paperbacks, £8.99.*

TOMORROW

Why Hume is the best-loved churchman in Britain, by The Most Reverend Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Dominican Order





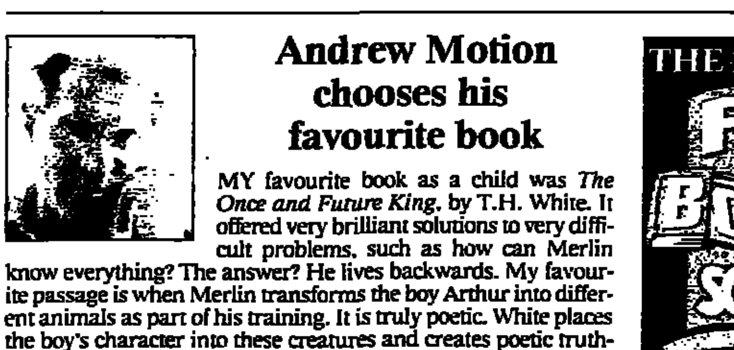
George Carey — relations were said to be strained — and, right, Widdecombe the convert

EARLY in 1977, Cardinal Hume rang to tell me the Holy Ghost had "sure as Hell" come to his rescue during a potentially embarrassing interview by Robin Day. Day had asked him about the vows of celibacy and, said the cardinal: "I felt the blood drain from my body . . . I had no idea where this would lead. I said a quiet prayer to the Holy Ghost and waited for my inevitable execution.

" 'Imagine,' said Day, 'that you were in a crowded room and suddenly . . . the most beautiful woman you had ever seen walked into that room. What would your feelings be as a man — not as a bishop or a priest?'

"It was then that the Holy Ghost took a firm hold. I replied: 'Mr Day, I hope you're as happily married to your wife as I am to the Church. So the only way I can think of answering your question is by inviting you to imagine yourself standing next to your beloved wife in a crowded room when suddenly the most beautiful woman you have ever seen .' I didn't have to finish. There was spontaneous applause from the studio audience. I had survived. The rest of the interview was a series of half volleys outside the off-stump."

NEIL BALFOUR

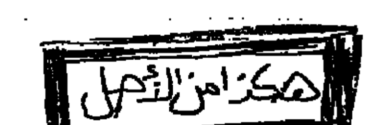


Andrew Motion chooses his favourite book

MY favourite book as a child was *The Once and Future King*, by T.H. White. It offered very brilliant solutions to very difficult problems, such as how can Merlin know everything? The answer? He lives backwards. My favourite passage is when Merlin transforms the boy Arthur into different animals as part of his training. It is truly poetic. White places the boy's character into these creatures and creates poetic truthfulness. It is immensely liberating for the readers.







We need care, not chemicals

Two hundred years ago, a French doctor, Philippe Pinel, removed the chains from his mental patients and began a revolution in the treatment of psychiatric illness. He dealt with them as human beings who might be cured, rather than just society's rejects. He also recognised his warders as co-reformers. At Ashworth Hospital, in the last year of the 20th century, inmates with personality disorders, including paedophiles and sex offenders, were locked in secure accommodation, where they were fed medication and pornographic videos. And this is progress?

The Ashworth report is a devastating indictment of one hospital. But it goes wider. When, in the course of the report's account of the failure of care and supervision, the phrase "therapeutic nihilism" cropped up, it told us something about the sad decline of psychiatric treatment in Britain. Once, we led the world in the notion of care rather than containment, the idea that with long-term therapy, even those suffering from psychopathic disorders might be rehabilitated.

At Ashworth, security became not just the overriding concern but the guiding principle. The very isolation that society demanded was the root of the problem. With few professional contacts in the wider field of psychiatry, and with prison training rather than developed expertise in mental care, staff began to lose sight of their objectives, to assimilate the values of inmates. They created a strange, anomalous society, a process which the American sociologist, Erving Goffman, in his book *Asylums* described as a form of inbreeding.

Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, writing to *The Times* last October, attacked the attitude of those who regarded some offenders as beyond help: "I think that in more recent years there are many people in the psychiatric profession who have come to the conclusion that people with psychopathic disorders are not treatable." He urged them not to retreat into defensive mode and simply to regard their job as one of protecting the public rather than engaging in the more demanding task of rehabilitating patients. His message was right and commendable. But it comes late in the day.

As someone who has seen more than I have really wanted to of the corridors and secure wards of one psychiatric hospital — the Royal Edinburgh — I know something of the dedication and commitment shown by those who work in this most difficult and under-appreciated area of the medical profession. But I also know about the pressures that have changed it, over the years, from a place which was once held up as the model of what a psychiatric hospital ought to be, to the soulless and depressing centre it has become today. Its wards have been upgraded, its walls brightly painted. But it is no longer a place where its inmates are nurtured, supported and helped gradually back into a state where they can once again cope with the unforgiving world outside.

This was a place built for the long-term treatment of its patients. You can still see the huge walled gardens outside where they used to work. As recently as the 1970s, there was a sense of teamwork involving professors, psychologists, nurses, social workers and patients. The public were part of it too — there would be regular art exhibitions, and social events to which they were invited. Patients joined regularly in group therapy sesssions where they would be encouraged to talk of their most deep-seated problems, even where this involved sexual disorders.

Today that ethos has all but gone. No latent paedophile in today's vigilante society would dare to confess his secrets in so exposed an arena. The psychotherapeutic aspect of treatment has, in any event, taken second place. Instead, there is what one psychiatrist describes as the "revolving door" approach. With the growing sophistication of tranquillisers and antidepressants, behaviour can be rapidly controlled, and patients who might have faced weeks of treatment are released, often after only a few days. Whether they are ready to face the outside world is another matter. Care in the community was meant to ensure that there was ample provision for them elsewhere. The reality is far from that.

At the same time, the Royal Edinburgh, like other big hospitals, which are seen as dinosaurs in today's terms, have had to cut costs and reduce staff numbers, which means that nurses do not have the time nor the expertise for therapeutic care. These skills are sometimes neither taught nor propounded. Research grants tend to go towards the development of new drugs rather than to the development of training. The net result is a drop in morale and the feeling that all that is required is to get patients out of the door as quickly as possible.

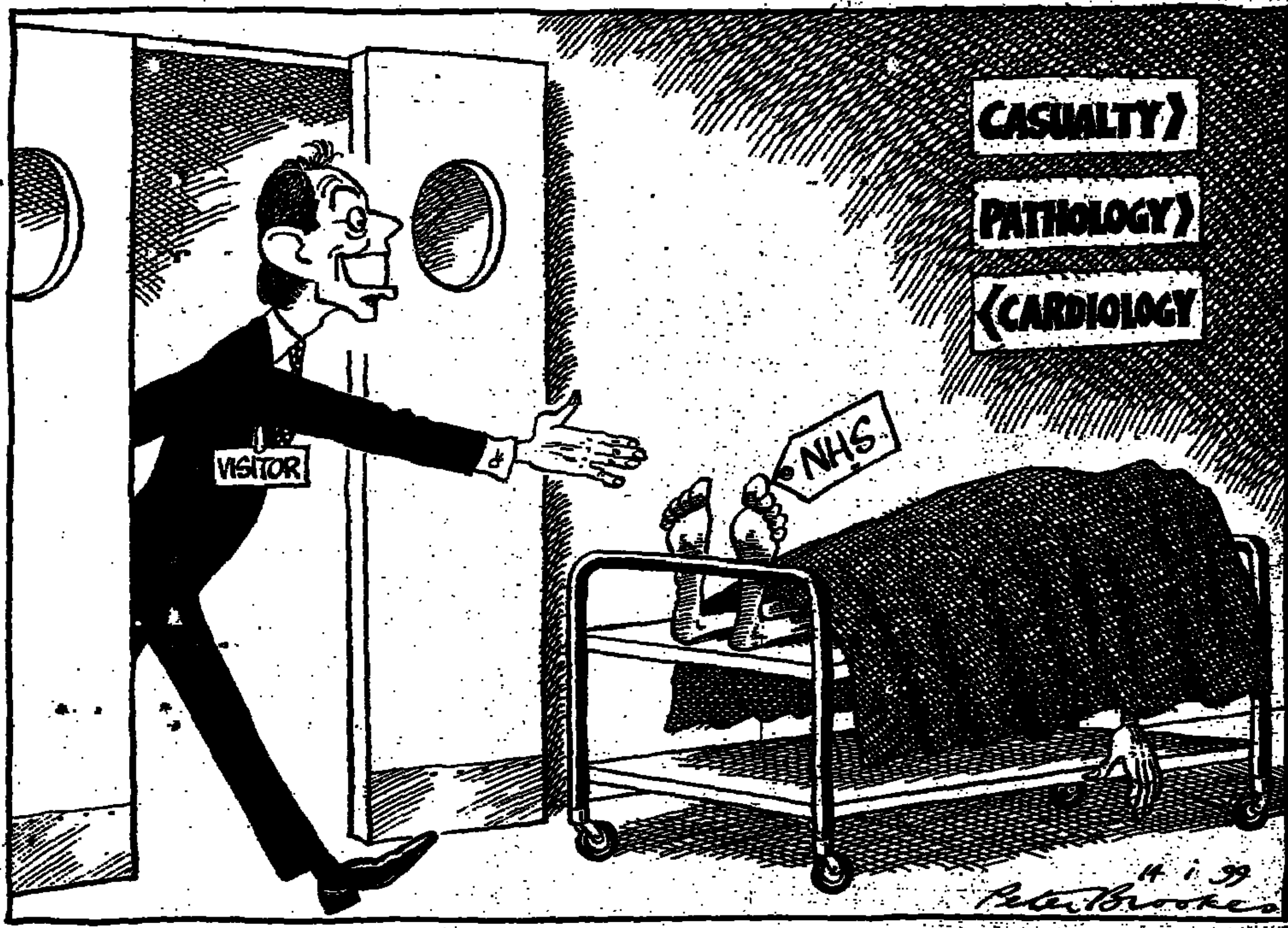
Magnus Linklater

That is not to denigrate the doctors themselves. Their diagnostic skills are undoubted, as is the progress they can make in finding the correct cocktails of drugs to transform a psychotic patient into someone who can take their place in the outside world. They are, often literally, lifesavers. But the emphasis today is on biochemistry, not psychotherapeutic care.

Mental illness, psychosis in particular, is seen as deriving from a chemical imbalance, and that is usually treatable. Where it is not, where a patient is potentially dangerous or a violent offender, secure accommodation is the only alternative. What is too often ignored is how a patient's behaviour may have developed in the first place, whether there may be underlying psychological and social issues which are exacerbating the problem.

All of this has seen the diminution of traditional psychiatry. That took time, it meant delving deep — and, of course, it did not always work. But it gave the patient one thing which, for all the sophisticated medication available, is still desperately needed: the human touch. Winston Churchill once said that a civilised society could be judged by the way it dealt with its prisoners. A stronger case could be made for the way it treats the mentally ill. By that standard, we do not measure up too well.

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"HI! HOW ARE YOU FEELING?"

Get real about Brazil

Market collapse is not necessarily contagious. It could even be a boon

Here we go again. In 1997 it was Asia and Thailand. In 1998 it was Russia and Eastern Europe. Now that it's 1999 it must be time for Latin America and Brazil.

The only thing that was surprising, or even unusual, about yesterday's financial mini-crisis was that it did not happen in the summer holidays. After all, there is now an established form in these matters. Thailand devalued in July two years ago. Russia devalued in August last year. So why didn't Brazil wait until the summer before devaluing its *real*, sacking its central bank Governor and triggering the latest bout of panic in stock markets from New York to Hong Kong? Maybe because January is the summer in Brazil. Or maybe because Latin Americans have never been noted for their timekeeping. Or maybe because the patterns apparently linking all these emerging market crises are not quite as simple as might be supposed.

Obviously, these events do have some features in common. They all involve poor countries whose people end up suffering grievously, in some cases even dying, as a direct result of the economic disasters. They all involve Western bankers and investors lending recklessly to countries of which they know little, often for no better reason than to keep up with their fashionable rivals on the other side of Wall Street or Cheapside. They all involve the Western world economic leadership, usually with Robert Rubin, the US Treasury Secretary, and Michel Camdessus, the head of the IMF, at the forefront, declaring publicly that "we have drawn a line in the sand — country X will not be allowed to fall". And, of course, they all involve financial speculators trying to profit from the stricken countries' misfortunes.

But having said all this, there is much less than meets the eye to the popular view that these successive collapses in Asia, Eastern Europe and now Latin America threaten to push the world into a dark age of economic anarchy — a lawless world of unregulated markets, in which barbaric hordes of speculators spread "financial contagion" around the world like some latter-day Black Death. This strange brand of financial millenarianism is already popular in Asia and France and it will undoubtedly gain additional adherents in Latin America as a result of this week's events. Yet to blame the recurrent crises in emerging markets on speculation and financial contagion is to confuse the symptoms of the disease with its cause.

What, then, has been the real cause? The real link between all the outbreaks of devaluation and financial crisis has not been "financial contagion", deregulation, reckless lending or even crisis mismanagement by the IMF and the G7. It has been the misguided policy of Governments in the afflicted countries and these policy blunders could in turn be blamed on arrogance, incompetence and outright corruption.

The blunders these Governments all made are all too familiar to generations of Britons from the experiences of John Major, Harold Wilson and Stafford Cripps. These blunders can be summarised in three sentences. Allowing a nation's currency to become overvalued is risky. Trying to "defend" a currency once it becomes overvalued is foolish. And staking a nation's entire economic reputation on this long-shot gamble is either recklessly incompetent or, as in the case of Russia and Indonesia, criminally corrupt.



Anatole Kaletsky

Neither Brazil, nor Russia, nor Thailand — nor, for that matter Indonesia, Malaysia and Korea — had any need to stake their national fortunes on a particular value of the exchange rate between the dollar and the *real*, *rouble* or *baht*. These Governments insisted, of course, that their strong currencies were symbols of national economic rehabilitation — that if these totems fell their countries would rapidly slide back to hyperinflation (in the case of Brazil), communism (Russia) or poverty (Thailand).

But by the very fact of making such wild assertions, the politicians who made them discredited the fundamental soundness of their own economic policies and guaranteed an exaggerated panic once their currencies collapsed. Instead of defending overvalued currencies to curb inflation, the Brazilian and Russian Governments could have worked harder to collect taxes and to limit wasteful public spending. But that, of course, would have conflicted with the interests of their ruling elites. The Governments of Thailand, Korea and Indonesia could have curbed the wildly imprudent foreign borrowing of their domestic banks and industrial companies. But that would have run into opposition from those countries' big businessmen and bankers — a not insubstantial problem when, as in Indonesia, the country's biggest businessman and banker was the President himself.

To see that this analysis is broadly right it is sufficient to note that countries which have avoided the temptation of fixing their exchange rates, while following tough anti-inflationary policies and carefully controlling the wilder excesses in their financial markets, have generally avoided too much damage in the general carnage of the past 18 months.

It is simply not true, as is still widely claimed, that all emerging markets have been subjected to random and irrational attack. After the Russian collapse, for example, many commentators assumed that the crisis would spread quickly to Central Europe, since many financial dealers could not tell the difference between Poland, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. However, the cynics (myself included) were proved wrong. After a few days of blind panic, the financial markets did start to discriminate. They recognised that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, while each had their problems, were not remotely in danger of a Russian-style default.

In Asia, too, many of the countries with solid finances and reasonably valued markets — for example Taiwan, Singapore and India — have passed through the crisis relatively unharmed. And in Hong Kong, where the damage was serious, a soundly managed currency was successfully defended by accepting a downward adjustment in property and stock market prices that was economically justifiable and long overdue. It will be interesting to see now whether the whole of Latin America succumbs to the contagion, as was being widely predicted yesterday. Or whether, as I suspect, the markets will again discriminate between those countries that are closely linked to Brazil and whose policies are unsustainable and those, such as Mexico, Chile and Argentina, which have sufficiently sound economies to weather the storm.

To be sure, even the best performing emerging economies have suffered serious losses from the collapse of trade with their neighbours. And all will continue to pay a high price for these crises for years, in the sense that Western bankers and investors have become more cautious about where they put their money and they will demand much higher potential returns. But the rediscovery of financial prudence by Western bankers and the rise in the cost of capital in emerging countries is surely a boon, not a curse. After all, everyone agrees that one of the main causes of all these crises has been indiscriminate lending by cheap and careless Western bankers for projects that should never have gone ahead because they could never yield a profit. One need only recall the twin towers in Kuala Lumpur, constructed largely so that Malaysia could boast of having the tallest buildings in the world.

In sum, I do not endorse the cataclysmic instant analysis of the Brazilian crisis implied by yesterday morning's action in world financial markets. Of course, Brazil's neighbours will suffer some shock waves and even the United States will be hit by a modest loss of exports. But the continuing strength of domestic demand and investment in the United States and Europe are far more important to the world economy, and even to Latin America, than anything happening in Brazil. As long as Americans and Europeans keep spending, the world will avoid recession and even the financial markets will probably get over this latest panic attack. As for Brazil, with a combination of the right policies and a bit of luck, devaluation could be turned to its advantage, as we found in Britain in 1992.

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Home strife

FOR the first time in months a Cabinet minister is to win public sympathy: he is being threatened with a writ by his builder. Alun Michael, the Welsh Secretary, is in dispute with a toiler at his home.

Alan Brain says the prospective leader of the Welsh National Assembly has not paid him: hired to do £10,000 of renovations, he was marched off the Cardiff property after Mrs Michael professed herself unsatisfied. "I felt I was being bullied," says Mary Michael. "I have sent part of his claim in full and final settlement."

● *ANY Cabinet minister who has not been subjected to the Peter Mandelson charm offensive, please come forward. Tuesday night found our hero at Grand Paradiso, Pimlico, where he shared a long and intimate dinner with his fellow home-alone, Chris Smith.*

Sex aide

SAFE sex, Ginger style. Geri Halliwell, the old Spice-turned-UN ambassador (a post disclosed here) is filming two videos on "safer sex" for teenagers. "Geri believes very strongly that women have the right to reproductive health and to look after themselves," says her chemist. "She is also a firm believer that



women should use the facilities we have in the West." Will Ann Widdecombe (right) approve?

● *ALAN BENNETT on attending a party with Noël Coward, where Dudley Moore was hammering a piano: "What a clever young man," said Coward, "He can play on the black notes as well as the white."*

Dark knight

SEAN CONNERY'S exclusion from the honours list seems to have made him a trifle chippy. Connery recently played a "Sir August de Wynter", who gained his title through despicable scheming. "De Wynter is a scoundrel, a blackmailer and a cheat," says Connery. "It makes you wonder what exactly are the criteria to qualify." Loyalty to the Union, perhaps.

● *ARCHIE NORMAN, the penny-pinching Tory chief executive, has puzzled employees by asking them to stop using e-mail. At a cost of 0.6p a message, I hear Scrooge told his workforce that this would save the broke party dosh — verbally, so as not to waste money.*

Fitness fanatic

AMID rumours of fragile health, General Pinochet has converted his drawing room into a gym. Still



waiting for the law lords to sort their briefs out, and thought by some to be showing the early signs of Alzheimer's disease, Pinochet has started the physical jerks at his retreat in Wentworth, Surrey.

According to producers of *The Real Pinochet*, a profile of the old tyrant: "He's a fitness fanatic. The iron discipline he applied to his country, he applies to himself. He was doing dozens of sit-ups."

● *HAS John Major usurped the late Harold Wilson as the Queen's favourite PM? After making him a Companion of Honour, the Queen invited John and Norma to a sleep-over at Sandringham on Tuesday. It was a strange crew: Amartya Sen, grouchy left-wing Master of Trinity College; Sir Michael Oswald, the director of Royal Studs, and the odd RAF buffer. The Majors were lucky to stay the night — an honour I cannot remember being extended to Baroness Thatcher after her fall.*

JASPER GERARD

'I want to see the first human clone born in the Dome as midnight strikes for the new millennium'

By James Wright

The Millennium Dome is the arena where Cool Britannia stands trial. Will the Dome be an advertising opportunity for new Labour, or a celebration of a Britain beyond Tony Blair's charmed circle?

It is very easy to be critical of new ideas such as the Dome; it takes guts and courage to be positive about them. That is why I got involved with the Millennium Youth Council, which has been advising on the project. I was genuinely excited about its potential, but the project has become too politicised.

The Dome has become a partisan stunt to prove how well new Labour is doing. The replacement of Peter Mandelson with the Prime Minister's old friend Lord Falconer of Thoroton has only emphasised the suffocatingly Blairite nature of the enterprise. The New Millennium Enterprise Company (NMEC), which is responsible for building and operating the Dome and co-ordinating a national programme of events, is a company in name only. Its literature even says "our work will help the Government meet its agenda and targets".

The Learning Experience, with which the youth council is most closely linked, will have as its focus the Tesco SchoolNet 2000 project. The public is invited to "build a huge treasure-chest of their own ideas and discoveries about life in the UK" on the Internet. But the godparent for the project is Floella Benjamin, the 1980s TV personality. The council has not met her and most are too young to have heard of her. The zone runs the risk of being merely a patronising, primary-school assembly.

The Mind Zone which will "celebrate the unique creativity of the human brain by exploring the nature of our senses and perceptions" is being sponsored by GEC and British Aerospace. Experiences announced so far will attempt to examine the way the brain operates, the human fascination with artificial intelligence and to challenge common perceptions of time and space. The intentions are good, but the results are already disappointing. Both sponsors are involved in arms technology and I feel uneasy about this. I don't object to where the money comes from, but I do object to it being hidden. No arms technology will be on display, but it should be. While it is not politically correct, or in line with new Labour thinking, advanced arms technology is exciting and, if celebrated appropriately, would, I am sure, attract a large number of visitors.

The lack of imgaination permeates every area. The Body Zone will not look at the possibility of what genetic engineering, cybernetics or cryogenics offers us. Instead exhibits will follow food round the digestion system and explore what a hangover is like. It will not even explore sex, Aids or cancer. We should be looking at all three and the potential medical and recreational benefits of cannabis, Ecstasy and cocaine. I would also like to see the first human clone born in the Dome at midnight, December 31, 1999.

The nearest one will get to "exploring our senses and perceptions" is to be dazzled by lights and deafened by music. You can get that any Saturday night in the Ministry of Sound. I expect far more from the Minister without Portfolio.

I would like to see substantive experiences and exhibits that tackle controversial issues. It should be a forum for public debate not for new Labour to tell us how fantastic it is. British achievements should be celebrated. The arms trade and fast-food giants deserve a proper mention, especially as they are footing the bill. McDonald's golden arches of Western capitalism should form the gates of the People's Millennium Dome.

Having had 18 months to test the water, NMEC should know what people do not want. Some people will paddle, visiting every zone, trying to take it all in. Some will swim, spending time in a few zones investigating what is on offer. Others will dive in, immersing themselves in one zone, discovering all there is to know there. All that could be achieved if the right things were planned for the Dome. But the risk is a sea of nothing in which we could all drown: swamped by political correctness, and leaving us with more questions than when we arrived. The risk is an "uncool Britannia".

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هكذا من الأصل



AN END TO ENTITLEMENT

The Government edges towards radical welfare reform

The first Prime Minister's Question Time of 1999 signalled another period of intense conflict between the major parties. Neither the exchanges on the current condition of the NHS nor the circumstances surrounding Peter Mandelson's resignation shed much light on the future direction of this administration. A more prophetic signal may have emerged before Tony Blair rose to his feet. It came in the subdued form of a departmental press release.

For the past 20 months, according to ministers, the Government has slowly but surely laid the foundations for fundamental reform of the welfare state. This process has been so protracted that, at times, it seemed unlikely that even a single-storey construction would ever be built on the site.

Mr Blair and his colleagues have not been inactive. But most of their measures have either been Green Papers which clarified key questions rather than offered bold answers, or incremental moves that extended the legislation undertaken by Peter Lilley. The most dramatic innovation — the "New Deal" — which is clearly ambitious and expensive, concentrates on the young unemployed rather than the core constituencies of the social security system.

The announcement by David Blunkett and Alistair Darling yesterday indicates that, having paddled at the edges of the Rubicon, the Government may be ready to cross it. The £80 million pilot programme will make state benefits for all claimants, including the disabled and single parents, dependent on timely attendance at an interview at which their eligibility for and efforts to acquire employment would be the centre of discussion. Failure to accept a reasonable offer of work would, for all but the disabled and single parents, invite the real prospect of benefit being withdrawn.

Although this particular project is based on only 12 centres covering 450,000 people over a three-year period, the forthcoming Welfare Reform Bill would allow the Government to create a comprehensive version of this scheme in little more than a year. If American experience is reproduced even modestly in this country then these experiments are likely to lead quite swiftly to a switch in policy at the national level.

The Government has shifted emphasis towards compulsion after attempting to achieve similar results by the voluntary route. That option, closely associated with Harriet Harman, the former Social Security Secretary, has, as widely predicted, proved a disappointment in practice. There may have been virtues, at least within the Labour Party, in moving towards a tougher stance in stages. Mr Darling has rightly recognised that this is the moment for a change of approach.

The Government's commitment to work as the best possible form of welfare is admirable. If it is to be fulfilled then rules must match the rhetoric. A large number of exemptions that dilute the link between availability for interview and receipt of benefit, or between job offers and loss of benefit, would undermine the integrity of the enterprise. There is also no compelling reason why lone parents whose children have reached school age should not be expected to enter further education, training or part-time employment. This would, though, require more flexibility about the rate at which benefit is removed from those willing to undertake such positions.

The Government would be wise to seize its opportunity to be more radical still while, as the unexpected fall in unemployment yesterday demonstrated, the state of the economy cannot be used as an alibi for inaction. If ministers expand the strategy they have outlined then welfare reform, in this sphere at least, may match or even exceed the advance publicity. This will in turn to a large degree determine the legacy of the Prime Minister and new Labour.

OUTRAGE IN COURT

Prosecutors move the goalposts to keep the Anwar case alive

For 11 weeks, Malaysian prosecutors have called witness after witness in their attempt to prove sensational allegations of "sexual misconduct and sodomy" by Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's sacked former Deputy Prime Minister. Every sordid detail, including DNA tests on a semen-stained mattress displayed, for added drama, in court, has been prominently reported in the country's normally staid press. In proceedings ostensibly concerned to establish whether the prosecution can establish its case against Mr Anwar for the "corrupt practice" of attempting to suppress criminal proceedings against him, this focus on alleged sexual acts has always looked more like an effort to destroy him politically by ruining his reputation as a devout Muslim than a proper concern to see justice done.

Now the prosecution has turned the questionable into the disgraceful. Yesterday, just as it was closing its case on the 45th day of these hearings, it successfully applied to move the goalposts by amending the four corruption charges. Mr Anwar is no longer accused of "directing" police to obtain statements from key prosecution witnesses to "to deny sexual misconduct and sodomy committed by him". The witnesses are now said to have made such "allegations", but Mr Anwar is no longer asserted to have committed any such acts.

After the slinging of so much defamatory mud, this may appear as a moral victory; but the effect is to rescue the prosecution's case from collapse, and to put Mr Anwar at graver risk of conviction. This is because the amendments lower the burden of proof. Even if all the allegations of illegal sexual conduct — homosexual intercourse is outlawed in Malaysia — are, as is almost certain, found to be fabricated lies, he could still be convicted of trying to get them retracted and sentenced to 14 years in jail.

Under Malaysian law, prosecutors have the right to alter charges at any time before the judge's ruling. But it is appalling that Judge Augustine Paul allowed the prosecution's 11th-hour retreat on the ground that "the commission of sexual misconduct and sodomy ... is not really a substantive element to be proved". So substantive did the judge find this "element" earlier, that when Mr Anwar's former driver contradicted his earlier court testimony that he had been sodomised, Judge Paul refused to have that testimony ruled out of court.

As Mr Anwar put it yesterday, with understandable bitterness: "What they cannot prove ... they change." And indeed, proof has eluded the prosecution. All but one of the key witnesses have withdrawn their allegations, saying that they were tortured or suborned into making them. The head of the Special Branch, called by the prosecution, produced a report he had written to the Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, in 1997, stating that the sexual allegations were groundless and "deliberately created" as part of a conspiracy. That was a year before Dr Mahathir sacked Mr Anwar as "morally unfit" to govern. And last week, the government chemist conceded that the mattress stains on which he had conducted DNA tests could have been planted by police, and that the tests could not warrant a conviction.

In this "corruption" case, there has never been any suggestion that Mr Anwar, a man reputed for integrity, has abused power for personal gain. At worst, he now stands accused of attempting to fend off a conspiracy to blacken his name and land him in prison. Even if Judge Paul — there is no jury — unexpectedly throws this case out today, the State has more charges in the pipeline. Mr Anwar's ordeal could thus endure until June at the earliest. The defence has yet to be heard. But already, Malaysian justice is in the dock.

FOSTERING COMPROMISE

The Bramleys' plea to adopt merits a fresh examination

"We are two good, honest, caring people who are willing to give up our home, family and friends and jobs to maintain Jade and Hannah's happiness." Jennifer and Jeffrey Bramley's plea to be allowed to keep the two girls they have fostered since March will provoke sympathy among many parents. On being told that they could not adopt the children, but must hand them back to Cambridgeshire social services, the Bramleys vanished, taking the girls with them. Although some may wonder whether responsible parents would subject their children to a nomadic life, this unusual, tragic case merits re-examination. If the local authority were prepared to do so, the Bramleys would be more likely to break their cover, and end the children's life on the road.

Both the Bramleys and Cambridgeshire social services claim that they are putting the interests of the children first. The authority argues that it decided to order the return of Jade and Hannah only after considerable deliberations. This case is exceptional: it is the first time in ten years that it has terminated such a placement. In hiding, the Bramleys claim the authority's decision was based on the view of "one social worker". The couple were criticised for, in their words, saying "no" and "don't" too often to the girls. When the Bramleys tried to reverse the authority's decision in court, the judge was "prevented from reading evidence" of the girls' happiness.

Many parents might conclude that, if the Bramleys are to be believed, the council is wrong to forbid two apparently loving adults from adopting children on the politically correct grounds of being too strict. Jade and Hannah's mother admits that, as her children are "a bit lively and get up to all sorts", "you do need to give them some discipline if they're naughty".

If Cambridgeshire social services have grounds for concern about the Bramleys' skills, these have yet to emerge. Mr Bramley's failure to admit that he had been in care when young was foolish, but this should not disqualify him from adopting a child. The Bramleys may well have been wrong to assume that they would be able to adopt their foster children. Fostering should not be seen as a backdoor to adoption. It was rash to delude Jade and Hannah that the Bramleys were to be their "forever Mummy and Daddy" before the adoption order was made. But, in light of the Bramleys' plea, the case that they have made and the devotion they appear to have for the two girls, the authority should now offer to reopen the case.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Fairness of Senate impeachment trial

From Professor Antony Allott

Sir, The commencement of the "trial" of President Clinton, if it goes ahead, will irretrievably destroy the claim of the United States to be a country of constitutional government under the rule of law. The proceedings subvert the overriding basic protections for every individual assured by the Constitution.

Under the rubric of "due process", everyone is entitled to a fair trial by an impartial tribunal; no one shall be compelled to incriminate him or herself by entrapment or otherwise. Everyone is entitled to these safeguards, even a President; no one is to be denied the equal protection of the laws.

The senators who will act as a so-called jury have through their public pronouncements already prejudged the case and revealed their prejudices. The vast publicity over the past months given to every detail, relevant or irrelevant, which incriminates the President renders the selection of an open-minded jury impossible.

In every other proceeding, if the position were similar, the case would be thrown out *in limine*, whatever the gravity of the charges, because of the impossibility of selecting an impartial jury, and never come to trial. Counsel for the President should take a preliminary objection to the fairness of the proceedings, irrespective of the merits of the charges.

It would go to restoring the credibility of the American judicial system if the presiding Chief Justice were to accede to this challenge.

Yours faithfully,
ANTONY ALLOTT,
Sorbrook Mill, Bodicote,
Oxfordshire OX15 4AU.
January 11.

From Margaret Countess Attlee

Sir, Although we are understandably bemused, we mustn't be too hard on the US Congress.

Three hundred and fifty years ago, on January 20, 1649, the trial of Charles I commenced — instigated by republicans. The King refused to recognise the court and a plea of guilty was entered on his behalf.

The question of witnesses arose. The republicans wanted evidence to be heard, to justify their having taken their King to trial. In the event, unable to call witnesses because of the plea of guilty, they appointed a committee, to sit in private, separate from the trial, to hear testimonies against the King. These depositions were then read out in public.

Had there been a 17th-century World Wide Web, no doubt the republicans would have published the evidence on the Internet.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET ATTLEE,
42 Wildcroft Manor,
Putney Heath, SW15 3TT.
January 9.

From Professor David Lowenthal

Sir, Comparisons of Clinton's impeachment trial with Andrew Johnson's are premature, but *The Times* does scant justice to the earlier defendant.

Johnson was no more "accidental" a President than Harry Truman, and for Tim Hames to term him "low-born and uncouth" (report, "Johnson 'was not fit for the doghouse'", January 8) defames an able and talented patriot, impeached on largely trivial charges for blatantly partisan reasons. Indeed, six years after leaving the White House Johnson was re-elected to the US Senate, with non-partisan support.

The instrument of Johnson's survival from impeachment, Senator Edmund Ross of Kansas, did not destroy his own political career (leading article, January 9) but only deflected it. Switching to the Democratic Party, Ross was made Governor of New Mexico and later head of the Immigration Bureau by President Grover Cleveland in the 1880s and 1890s.

American party politics were once more flexibly lenient than they have since become.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LOWENTHAL,
56 Crown Street,
Harrow on the Hill HA2 0HR.
January 9.

Smoot of Ute

From Mr Peter Golds

Sir, Your "salient story" on Senator Reed Smoot (leading article, December 28) has an additional resonance for the millennium as the US Senate considers the activities of President Clinton.

In 1902 the Senate sat for some time debating whether to admit the Mormon Smoot who had been appointed to it by the Utah Legislature on that state's admission to the Union.

Eventually a Senate stalwart observed his colleagues and pointed out that the body included numerous "monogamists who did not monog" and could therefore admit "a polygamist who did not polyg".

Perhaps the current Senate should remember this.

Yours faithfully,
PETER GOLDS,
11 The Spinney,
Wembley, Middlesex HA0 2QS.
January 4.

Commission accused on Europe's missing millions

From Mr Geoffrey Martin

Sir, Your leading article, "In Europe's name" (January 13), strings together a number of facts — some established, some unproven — to launch an attack on the European Commission. It quotes the figure of £3 billion estimated by the European Court of Auditors as not properly accounted for. But according to the court, more than 90 per cent of the irregularities are due to national authorities, not the Commission.

National governments have to take responsibility for any irregularities in areas of EU action under their control. Out of 950 cases recently investigated by the anti-fraud unit (Uclaf), 925 related to spending in EU countries.

Much of the problem is not due to fraud but accounting errors, some of which are later remedied. In addition, the amounts involved have been on a clear downward path for some years. To point out that the share of EU spending for which the court cannot account is similar to the level of actual fraud estimated by the Benefits Agency for the UK social security system is not to minimise the problem, but to put it in perspective.

Less than 20 per cent of the EU budget is managed directly by the European Commission. Of course, this still adds up to a significant amount of public expenditure, and EU citizens have every right to expect it to be properly managed. But the implication that the Commission connives in fraud is wholly wrong.

Cases of fraud have been uncovered by the Commission's anti-fraud unit, not by the European Parliament. Legal immunity has been withdrawn from officials to allow judicial proceedings to take place in the most serious cases, and disciplinary action taken in others.

Dismissing the nine ongoing and new Commission reforms announced by President Santer this week as "a few German-made bones of accountability" is to divert attention from the question that ought to be asked: how current deficiencies can be tackled.

Yours faithfully,
GEOFFREY MARTIN
(Head of the Representation in the UK),
The European Commission,
8 Storey's Gate, SW1P 3AT.
January 13.

From Sir Alan Smith

Sir, Members of the European Parliament are not renowned for their frugality when spending the taxpayers' money. When there is a demand that all 20 of the European Commissioners, including Jacques Santer, be sacked for fraud, inefficiency and mismanagement, then perhaps we should listen.

Whilst very little financial information is made available to the British public it would appear that the commissioners spend, on our account, the equivalent of £65 billion per annum. The opportunities for extravagance and downright dishonesty must be immense.

One must ask why Labour, Liberal Democrats and a small minority of Conservative politicians, plus leaders of some of our larger companies, are so keen to bulldoze us into the euro and full integration with the European Union. Could it be because they, too, would like to get on the gravy train and enjoy all the perks which seem to abound in Brussels?

When are all these people going to realise that they can squander our taxes with high living and the perks of office only for so long? Eventually, and hopefully before too long, they will be thrown out of office.

Yours truly,
ALAN SMITH
(President,
Dawson International plc),
Ardgairney House, Cleish,
By Kinross, Kinross-shire KY13 7LG.
January 13.

From Mr Colin Bullen

Sir, The current dispute between the European Commission and the European Parliament serves to illustrate the true nature of both, and emphasises how different is the culture of the EU from that of the UK.

The Commission is shown to be at best incompetent, or at worst corrupt, but certainly imbued with enormous arrogance, while the Parliament is revealed as ineffective, the only weapon at its disposal being one it dare not use.

The naive hope expressed by some MEPs that they will be able to shame Commission members into resignation shows ignorance of the disposition of these bureaucratic elites, while Jacques Santer's promised investigation will have as much effect as one of Sir Humphrey Appleby's famous leak inquiries.

The British people should take warning from these events and turn back from further involvement in this putative federal superstate or else risk losing all democratic control over those who seek to be their masters.

Yours faithfully,
COLIN BULLEN
(NEC member, Campaign for an Independent Britain),
119 Douglas Road,
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UE.
January 13.

'Backdoor' euthanasia

From Lord Ashbourne

Sir, Your reports of January 6 show the anguish that can be caused to families when patients' lives are shortened by the withholding of food and fluids (see also letters, January 9). A change of official policy may be needed to prevent many more such tragic cases.

The House of Lords judgment in the well-known case of Tony Bland (1993) defined food and water as "medical treatment" if given through a tube, which allowed them to be withdrawn.

The Department of Health solicitor, when giving evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Medical Ethics in 1993, was reported in the *British Medical Journal* of May 1, 1993, as saying that this judgment "greatly clarified the position and laid down legal principles which point a way forward for the public and the medical profession". He declared that it was "now open to the courts to leave it there and let doctors get on with the business of applying it".

Patients in so-called PVS (persistent vegetative state) are not the only ones affected. The BMA's 1998 consultation paper, *Withdrawing and Withholding Treatment*, asked for opinions on withholding water from victims of a stroke.

If patients are to feel safe in hospital, we should restore to our common law the principle that those who have another person in their care may never exercise that care in a manner intended to bring about that person's death.

Yours faithfully,
ASHBOURNE,
House of Lords.
January 7.

From the Reverend Anthony G. J. Irwin

Sir, Can anyone honestly be surprised by your report today, "Police check hospitals over 'backdoor euthanasia'", when society has been condoning an erosion in the value of human life for a number of years?

People should wake up and realise that acts of abortion and euthanasia involve killing the most defenceless members of our society.

Yours faithfully,
A. G. IRWIN,
22 Glebeland, Churchstow,
Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3RD.
January 6.

Millennium 'sort-out'

From Mrs Anne Hichens

Sir, Over a thousand years ago the people of this parish, Langford, were building a new, bigger church, using the stones and carvings from two older ones.

By 1067 it was there and has been loved and used continually for the intervening years. We have just strengthened the tower and are about to sort out a bit of roof. That is our local millennium heritage and our vicar looks after 12 similar gems.

Mr P. K. Collymore (letter, December 31) objects to emotive language about the Dome while using it himself. "Whinge" is not the word for what I feel. I am very angry at the waste of a huge amount of (effectively) our money on what appears to be a self-congratulatory seaside funfair in a tent which it is hoped will last a few years.

I can think of many causes more worthy than this: we could actually solve homelessness, for instance, or the dearth of trained psychiatrists for the mentally ill and prisoners.

At least in a thousand years, if mankind survives, someone might say we had had a good try at sorting ourselves out at this time.

Yours,
ANNE HICHENS,
Radcot Bridge Farm,
Brampton,
Oxfordshire OX18 2XS.
January 2.

From car to bus

From the Director-General of the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Sir, Dr Richard Knowles of Salford University makes many salient points about the challenge of getting habitual car drivers on to public transport (report, "Bus lanes alone 'will not shift Mondeo man'", January 7). However, I would like to respond to his criticism of Quality Partnerships — local agreements between bus operators and local authorities to make bus travel more attractive.

There are over 25 of these schemes across the country and clearly they range in size and effectiveness. Certainly bus lanes alone will not bring about the desired shift from car to bus. Bus lanes must be properly enforced and drivers who abuse bus lanes must be subject to strict penalties. Also, local authorities must be brave and provide bus-priority measures where they will benefit passengers most, which is not necessarily where they will cause the least upset to car drivers.

It is true that there is little data available on exactly what percentage of car drivers are now using the bus in Quality Partnership areas, but the point is that, if the schemes are allowed to flourish, some will. It will take some time, but surely Dr Knowles did not expect an instant solution to such a difficult problem?

Yours faithfully,
VERONICA PALMER,
Director-General, Confederation of Passenger Transport UK,
Imperial House,
15-19 Kingsway, WC2B 6UN.

Church nudity

From Mr Robert Key, MP for Salisbury (Conservative)

Sir, The Dean and Chapter of Salisbury are right to welcome challenging sculptures to our cathedral (photograph and report, "Naked men in the cloisters disturb cathedral calm", January 9; *Credo*, Weekend, same day). They hope they will be spiritually creative.

Neither male nudity nor such clerical aspirations are new to Salisbury's Christians. Attendance at May's Salisbury Festival sculpture exhibition will not be compulsory: but from 1475 the congregation in St Thomas's Church at the other end of our High Street were forced to contemplate the huge doom painting over the chancel arch featuring nudes in Heaven and Hell — including a male nude in his bishop's mitre climbing out of his coffin.

Reformation fanatics whitewashed it, but Salisbury's Victorians were not prudes and restored it.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT KEY,
House of Commons.
January 9.

'Soft' and 'hard' drugs

From the UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator

Sir, I am not alone in maintaining that any attempt to draw a distinction between so called "hard" and "soft" drugs is unrealistic (letters, January 6) and even dangerous in seeking to wish away the proven harm that drugs like amphetamines and cannabis can do to their users. I have not experienced any disagreement with any minister on this.

All drugs are harmful, in some way, and enforcement against all illegal substances continues. Guidance and information produced by Government and its agencies for parents, professionals and young people themselves set out clearly the risks and consequences of taking illegal drugs, not defining any as "soft" or "hard". The DfEE's recent guidelines for schools, which I endorsed, are no different.

I have acknowledged that some drugs cause particular damage to individuals and the community, and that we should address their availability and misuse as a particular priority. This does not mean that we have given up on the others. All our objectives must be to reduce young people's drug misuse, to reduce drug-related crime, to increase participation in effective treatment programmes and to reduce the availability of drugs.

All these initiatives are embodied in the new ten-year strategy, *Tackling Drugs to Build a Better Britain*. To achieve them government departments and agencies — both statutory and voluntary — are increasingly working closely together at local, national and international level. Drug action teams across the country have recently submitted to me their action plans for the coming year; and over £200 million extra has been allocated over the next three years for anti-drugs activity.

This will fund programmes to reduce drug-related crime and to get those with the most serious drugs problems into treatment and rehabilitation, as well as supporting the development of more sustained and better prevention and education programmes in schools and community settings. I shall report progress and set out an annual plan of action for the United Kingdom in the spring.

Sincerely,
KEITH HELLAWELL,
UK Anti-Drugs Co-ordinator,
Cabinet Office, Room 60A/2,
Horse Guards Road, SW1P 3AL.

Letters may be faxed to 0171-782 5046
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Art and nature

From Mr B. S. Baggaley

Sir, I was surprised to see that Charles Saatchi has called his exhibition *Neurotic Realism Part I*.

Earlier versions of Tomoko Takahashi's type of work (review and photograph, Arts, January 12) have existed for many years, on two levels, in my house — in the garage and in my daughters' bedroom.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN BAGGALEY,
Westwood,
201 Stallington Road,
Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire ST11 9PB.
January 12.



COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM HOUSE
January 12: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh gave a Dinner Party.

The following were invited: The Rt Hon John Major and Mrs Major, Professor and Mrs Amartya Sen, Dr and Mrs David Livesey, Sir Michael and Lady Angela Oswald and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Craig of Radley and Lady Craig.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
January 13: The Prince of Wales, Colonel in Chief, Army Air Corps, this morning received Brigadier Peter McQueen upon relinquishing the appointment of Director Army Aviation, and Brigadier Colin Sibun upon assuming the position.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
January 13: The Princess Royal this morning presented The Institution of Incorporated Engineers Young Woman Engineer of the Year Award 1998 at The Royal Society of Arts, 8 John Adam Street, Westminster, London.

Her Royal Highness, President, Royal Yachting Association, this afternoon attended a Luncheon at the London International Boat Show, Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, Warwick Road, South Kensington, London.

The Princess Royal, President, British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, this evening attended the British Apparel Export Awards at The Royal Lancaster Hotel, Lancaster Terrace, Westminster, London.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal will present Worldaware's tenth anniversary Business Awards at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, London W1, at 10.20; as President of the Patrons, Crime Concern, will attend a Neighbourhood Safety Partnership luncheon at Claridge's at noon; and as patron, British Quality Foundation, will attend a founder members reception at St James's Palace at 6.45.

Leonard Cheshire Lecture

Lord Puttnam delivered the Leonard Cheshire Lecture at Stationers' Hall, London, EC4, last night. Mr Jonathan Dimbleby and Sir David Goodall, Chairman of Leonard Cheshire, also spoke. Among those attending were:

Sir Patrick Walker (Leonard Cheshire International Chairman), Mr Bryan Dutton (Director General, Leonard Cheshire), Mr Ronald Travers (Leonard Cheshire Golden Jubilee Chairman), Mr David Grayson (Chairman of the National Disability Council), Mr Richard Gutch (Chief Executive, Arthritis Care), Mr Bert Massie (Director, RADAR), Mr Bill McClimont (Chairman, UKHCA), the Hon Sir Peter Ramsbotham, Ms Sue Sayer (Chief Executive, United Response) and Mr James Strachan (Chief Executive, RNID).

Luncheons

Wales and Chester Circuit
The Leader, Mr Christopher Pitchford, QC, gave a luncheon in the Middle Temple, on Saturday, January 9, 1999, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the call to the Bar in 1948 of the Right Hon Sir Tasker Watkins, VC. Those present included:
Sir Tasker and Lady Watkins, His Honour John Rutter and His Honour Charles Pitchford, who were also called to the Bar in 1948, the Recorder of Cardiff, Judge Michael Gibbon, QC, His Honour Michael Evans, QC, and past and present Presiding Judges, Leaders and Treasurers of the Circuit and their wives.

Wax Chandlers' Company
The Lord Mayor, accompanied by Mr Alderman and Sheriff Gavyn Arthur and the Common Cryer and Sergeant-at-Arms, was the guest of honour at a luncheon given by the Master, Wardens and Court of Assistants of the Wax Chandlers' yesterday at Wax Chandlers' Hall. During the luncheon the Master, Lieutenant Commander Nicholas Bailey, RN, presented cheques to the Lord Mayor in support of his charity appeal for Leuka 2000 and to Mrs Alison Kahane, Headmistress of St Alban's School, Holborn, for her after-school club.

The Lord Mayor presented the Wax Chandlers' Prize to Wing Commander Thomas Salter for the best paper submitted to the British Bee Keepers' Association in their 1998 senior examination.

Royal Regiment of Wales

To mark the 150th anniversary of the action at Chillianwallah, during the 2nd Sikh War, a ceremony of remembrance was held at the memorial of the Royal Regiment of Wales (24th/41st Foot) in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea yesterday.

Dinners

Catholic Independent Schools' Conference
The Catholic Independent Schools' Conference holds its Annual Dinner at Swallow Royal Hotel, Bristol tomorrow. The Very Rev Malcolm McMahon, Provincial of the Order of St Dominic, and Dr Eamon Duffy, Reader in Church History in the University of Cambridge will be the speakers. The Right Rev Mervyn Alexander, Bishop of Clifton, will be concelebrating Mass the following morning.

Guild of Freemen of the City of London
Mr Norman Munday, Master of the Guild of Freemen of the City of London, presided at a Scottish dinner held last night at the Caledonian Club, Halkin Street, London. Mr Alex Wilson and Sir Anthony Grant also spoke.

Thanksgiving

John Schneider
A service of thanksgiving for the life of John Schneider will be held at Holy Trinity, Brompton, London SW7, at 2pm on Thursday, January 21, 1999. All welcome.





Seurat's *L'Ile de la Grande Jatte*, above, and *Le Journal*, by Picasso, two of the Whitney paintings coming up for sale

Art collection sale set to top £50m

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

MASTERPIECES by Cézanne and Seurat are among an extraordinary collection of Impressionist and modern art, once described as among the finest in private hands, that is expected to fetch more than $80 million (£50 million) at auction this spring.

The works were acquired by the late John Hay "Jock" Whitney, the American Ambassador, publisher and venture capitalist, and his wife, the late Betsey Cushing Whitney. Both were major philanthropists and benefactors, giving away important paintings to museums and galleries and supporting medical charities and hospitals.

Nine years after Sotheby's sold the Whitneys' Renoir — *Au Moulin de la Galette* — for a record £45 million (against an estimated £30 million) the estate will be dispersed in a series of six sales in New York between April and May. The proceeds will cover "state taxes and other obligations", according to the auction house.

Cézanne's *Rideau, Cruchon et Compotier*, a still life of 1893-94, is estimated to fetch between $25 million and $35 million. Charles Moffett, co-director of Sotheby's worldwide department of Impressionist and modern art, described it as "one of the greatest still lifes by one of the greatest still-life painters of all time". It is, he added, one of the most important Cézannes to appear at auction in recent years. The Whitneys had acquired it nearly 50 years ago.

The Seurat is his *L'Ile de la Grande Jatte*, which carries the same estimate as the Cézanne. Mr Moffett said: "It is the only major image relating to Seurat's most famous work that remains in private hands. It is one of two large, final works that are preparatory to *Un Dimanche à la Grande Jatte* in the Art Institute of Chicago."

The art historian John Russell once wrote: "This was the collection of two people who did not collect to impress, or to fill gaps, or to hoard. They collected what touched them directly."

Birthdays today

Captain Sir Alastair Aird, Private Secretary to Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, 68; Professor Sir Melville Arnott, cardiologist, 90; Mr Peter Barkworth, actor, 70; Mr Richard Briers, actor, 65; Baroness Brooke of Ystradfellte, 91; Baroness Byford, 58; Lord Catto, 76; the Earl of Drogheda, 62; Miss Faye Dunaway, actress, 58; Lord Ellenborough, 73; Miss Maina Gielgud, ballerina, 54; Miss Andree Grenfell, former managing director, Glemby International, 59; Miss Sophie Harley, fashion designer, 34; Sir Martin Holdgate, president, Zoological Society of London, 68; Professor Sir Hans Kornberg, FRS, former Master, Christ's College, Cambridge, 71; Mr John Lever, Headmaster, Canford School, Dorset, 47; Mr Warren Mitchell, actor, 73; Lieutenant-Colonel Nigel J. Newman, Chapter Clerk, St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, 57; Mr Trevor Nunn, artistic director, National Theatre, 59; Sir Neil Pritchard, former diplomat, 88; Mr C.R. Reeves, banker, 63; Sir Vernon Seccombe, former chairman, Plymouth Hospitals' NHS Trust, 71; Mrs Hazel Williamson, QC, 52; Sir John Woodcock, former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 67; Mr Roger Young, chief executive, Scottish Southern Energy, 55.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: John Biddle, Unitarian, Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, baptised this day, 1615; Benedict Arnold, American general and traitor, Connecticut, 1741; Matthew Maury, hydrographer, Spottsylvania, Virginia, 1806; Henri Fantin-Latour, painter, Grenoble, 1836; Wilson Carlile, founder of the Church Army, Brixton, London, 1847; Pierre Loti, novelist, Rochefort, France, 1850; John Dos Passos, novelist, Chicago, 1896; Albert Schweitzer, doctor, musician and missionary, Kaysenberg, France, 1875; Sir Cecil Beaton, photographer, London, 1904; Yukio Mishima, writer, Tokyo, 1925.

DEATHS: Edmond Halley, astronomer, London, 1742; George Berkeley, philosopher and Bishop of Cloyne 1734-53, Oxford, 1753; Samuel Spalding, philosopher, Cape of Good Hope, 1843; Jean Ingres, painter, Paris, 1867; Henry Edward Manning, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster 1865-92, London, 1892; Lewis Carroll (pseudonym of Charles Dodgson), writer, Guildford, Surrey, 1898; Humphrey Bogart, actor, Hollywood, 1957; Anthony Eden, 1st Earl of Avon, Prime Minister 1955-57, Salisbury, 1977; Peter Finch, actor, Los Angeles, 1977.

The last London Frost Fair was held, 1814.

The first demonstration of Alexander Graham Bell's telephone was made to Queen Victoria at Osborne House, Isle of Wight, 1878.

Meeting

Royal Institute of International Affairs
Justice Richard J. Goldstone of the Constitutional Court of South Africa was the speaker at a meeting of the Royal Institute of International Affairs held last night at Chatham House. Lord Howell of Guildford presided.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr M.A.J. Anton-Smith and Dr S.B.J. Eldridge
The engagement is announced between Mark, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Anton-Smith, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, and Sara, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Gordon Eldridge, of Ashtead, Surrey.

Mr C.G. Conant and Miss C.J. Birch
The engagement is announced between Christopher, elder son of Mr and Mrs Gordon Cotant, of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and Caroline, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Nicholas Birch, of Biddenden, Kent.

Mr N.J. Denison-Pender and Miss L.M. Cameron
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, younger son of Mr. James Denison-Pender, of Glenbrook House, Balerno, and of Mrs Gill Denison-Pender, of Nanyuki, Kenya, and Louisa, elder daughter of Brigadier and Mrs Duncan Cameron, of Glenfarg, Perthshire.

Mr D.W. de Vos and Miss S.L. Pullen
The engagement is announced between Dirk, son of Mr W. de Vos, of Johannesburg, and Mrs A. de Vos, of Cape Town, South Africa, and Samantha, daughter of the late Mr Lester Pullen and of Mrs Angela Pullen, of Nassau, Bahamas.

Mr A.J.P. Harwood and Miss T. Carey
The engagement is announced between Anthony, youngest son of Captain and Mrs Stephen Harwood, of Catherington, Hampshire, and Tanith, elder daughter of Mrs Lynne Carey-Day, of Weston, Connecticut, and the late Dr Kim Mukerjee, of Sydney, Australia.

Mr R.S. Hermer and Miss C.E. Gestetner
The engagement is announced between Richard, son of Judith and Ian Hermer, and Caren, daughter of Jacqueline and Jonathan Gestetner.

Mr M.C.D. Hobden and Miss H.F. Wormald
The engagement is announced between Mark, son of Mr and Mrs David Hobden, of Patching, West Sussex, and Hannah, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Eric Wormald, of Chew Stoke, Somerset.

Mr H.C.S. Lowe and Miss L.C. Gemmell
The engagement is announced between Hunta, only son of Mr Michael Lowe, of Oberon, Australia, and Mrs Ian Hill, of Sydney, Australia, and Lucy, younger daughter of the late Mr Michael Gemmell and Mrs Philip Darwin, and stepdaughter of Mr Philip Darwin, of Cowden, Kent.

Mr D.F. MacDonald and Miss P.M. Russell
The engagement is announced between Dudley, son of the late Mr and Mrs Frank MacDonald, of Pollokshields, Glasgow, and Patricia, daughter of the late Dr William Michael Russell and of Mrs Russell, of Bevenden House, Great Chart, Kent.

Mr J.W. Mackenzie and Miss I.G. MacLachlan
The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr and Mrs David Mackenzie, of Taynton, Oxfordshire, and Islay, daughter of Mr and Mrs Hugh MacLachlan, of Mount Pleasant, South Australia.

Mr B.P.N. McCann and Miss J.J. Tyndall
The engagement is announced between Ben, elder son of Wing Commander and Mrs David McCann, of Bracknell, Berkshire, and Jennifer, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Ron Tyndall, of Goderich, Ontario.

Mr A.E.S.J. McIntyre and Miss L. Shorter
The engagement is announced between Jamie, son of the late David Scott McIntyre and the late Mrs Joy McIntyre, of Wythall, Ross-on-Wye, and Lucy, younger daughter of David Shorter and Mrs Susan Shorter, of Rochester, Kent.

Mr G.J. Murray and Miss J.K. Brown
The engagement is announced between Guy, son of Mr Geoffrey and the Hon Mrs Murray, of Northwood, Middlesex, and Juliette, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Brown.

Mr W.J. Record and Miss S.A. Momberg
The engagement is announced between William, son of Mr Anthony Record, of Denton, Kent, and Mrs Susan Record, of Hythe, Kent, and Serena, daughter of Mr D. Momberg, of Johannsburg, and Mrs V. Kemsley, of Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.

Mr R. Reeves and Miss V.V. Williams
The engagement is announced between Rupert, son of Mr and Mrs Duncan Reeves, and Victoria, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Williams, of Emsworth, Hampshire.

Mr H.D.B. Ridgwell and Miss H.P. Luard
The engagement is announced between Hamish, son of Mr and Mrs A.H.B. Ridgwell, of Reigate, Surrey, and Henrietta, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Luard, of Staunton, Gloucestershire.

Mr B.T. Ruse and Miss S.C. Oliver
The engagement is announced between Tom, son of Mr Bill Ruse and the late Mrs Ruse, of Sydney, Australia, and Suzanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Andrew Oliver, of Stourton Caundle, Dorset.

HM Forces appointments

ROYAL NAVY
Rear-Admiral B.B. Perowne to be Chief Executive Naval Bases and Supply Agency in succession to Rear-Admiral J.A. Trewby on March 23.
Commodore M.G. Wood to be promoted Rear-Admiral and to be Director-General, Fleet Support (Operations and Plans) in succession to Rear-Admiral B.B. Perowne on March 9.
Commodore C.D. Standford to be promoted Rear-Admiral and to be Chief of Staff to the Surgeon-General.

Reception

Royal Academy of Engineering
Sir David Davies, CBE, FEng, FRS, President of The Royal Academy of Engineering, and Lady Davies were the hosts at a New Year Reception for Fellows and their guests, held last night at 6 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1. Mr Peter Ewins, FEng, Chief Executive of the Met Office, delivered a lecture entitled "The Truth about Global Warming".

Latest will

Lady Orde, of Wherwell, Andover, Hampshire, left estate valued at £326, 419 net.

PERSONAL COLUMN

I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. Psalm 69.30 (AV).

BIRTHS

ARCHER - On 7th January 1999. Penny (née Day) and Robert are delighted to announce the birth of their first child Fleur Sarah Louise.

ASLETT - On January 9th 1999, to Anne (née Maclaren) and Will, a daughter, Olivia Evelyn.

BURRELL - On January 6th 1999 to Helen (née Minoprio), and Richard a daughter, Hermione Catherine, a sister for George.

COOPER KENTON - On January 7th at The Portland Hospital to Shelley and Justin, an eagerly awaited and much loved daughter, Stella Edie.

CORMACK - To Ross and Miranda (née Brooker), on Wednesday 13th January, a son, Rupert Angus at the *Matilda Hospital, Hong Kong*. A brother for Camilla, Sofia and Rory.

CROW - On January 7th at RUH in Bath to Nicola (née Kyme) and Paul, a beautiful boy, Charles John (to be known as Charlie).

DRAKE - On January 12th 1999 to Julie and Peter, a daughter, Louise Jeanne Julia.

FAVILLIER - On January 9th to Helen and Dominique, a son, Henry Louis Robert. Many thanks to Parsons Green Midwives Team.

HUSSEIN - On January 7th at The Portland Hospital to Tasnim Ghiawadwala and Saf Hussein, a beautiful daughter, Leila.

KARAMOLLA - On January 7th at The Portland Hospital to Aysebel and Yilmaz, a beautiful daughter, Yasmin, a sister for Timur and Mert.

LLOYD-JONES - On January 12th 1999, in London, to Isabel and Tomas, a daughter, Amber Susan Mary, a sister for Ella.

LODER - On January 11th 1999 to Anna (née Green) and Sandy, a son, Edward (Ned) Alastair, a brother for Robert.

McMILLAN - James Christian on 12th January, a beautiful son, to Vincent and Natasha and brother to Laura and Iona.

MEAD - On Christmas Eve 1998, to Archana (née Kaul) and Kevin, a son, Henry James.

MIMURA - On December 12th 1998 at The Portland Hospital to Akiko (Kashihara) and Ippei, a daughter, Tomoka.

NEAL - To Douglas and Anna, on 17th December 1998, a beautiful daughter, Grace Elizabeth Kate.

PALMER - On Wednesday 6th January 1999 to Mary Jane (née Robinson) and Neil, a daughter, Hannah Beatrice, a sister for Phoebe.

PESCATORI - On January 8th at The Portland Hospital to Valeria and Andrea, a beautiful daughter, Giulia.

RICHES - On January 8th to Vikki (née Filsell) and David (C.D.) a daughter, Sarah Anna.

SMELLIE - On January 2nd to Jane (née Aston) and Angus, a son, Fraser Gordon.

TAUBI - On January 9th at The Portland Hospital to Renee and Albert, a son Edmond, a brother for Jourdan.

von der BRELIE - On January 8th at The Portland Hospital to Sophie (née Lambin) and Ulrich, a daughter, Lara.

WARD - On January 6th to Katharine (née Morrison) and Michael, a daughter Isabel Katharine, a sister for Hannah.

WISE - On January 8th 1999 to Nicolette (née Agnew) and Nicholas, a daughter, Olivia Janet Ann, a sister for Rosalind, Edmund and Toby.

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARIES

CARR - John and Hilary Carr (née Marnham). Love and congratulations from the family.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BULL - M.A.M. (Maggie). Families and friends would like to thank everyone for their kind messages of sympathy, their support and their very generous donations to the South Kyme Church Bell Fund.

DEATHS

ADAM - Ann Patricia (née Holcroft), widow of Major Tom Adam of Denmore, peacefully on 11th January 1999. Service at Holy Trinity Church, Eckington on Saturday 16th January 1999 at 1.00pm. Flowers or donations for Cancer Research to E. Hill, Pershore.

BATES - Eileen on 8th January 1999 at the Middlesex Hospital, London after a long illness. Formerly with the Church Mission Society. Funeral service will take place at St Martin-in-the-Field, WC2 on Wednesday 20th January at 2.45pm. Family flowers only but donations in Eileen's name may be made to RNLI. All enquiries to 0181 677 7377.

BLACKWOOD - Phyllis Marion, on 11th January 1999, aged 87, peacefully at home after a long illness. Wife of the late Wing Commander Douglas Blackwood, much loved mother of Maureen and Michael, loving mother-in-law and grandmother. Funeral Service at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Dalmahoy, on Friday, 15th January at 2.00pm. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to Marie Curie Cancer Care or Redwings Horse Sanctuary, c/o Murray Beith Murray WS, 39 Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3BH.

CASSELS - Lt. Col. Harold Grant, MC and Bar, died peacefully on 12th January 1999 aged 77 years. Beloved husband of Katherine, much loved father of Charles and his wife Lucy and devoted grandfather to Oliver and Rupert. Funeral service to be held at St Nicholas' Church, Fisherton-de-la-Mere, Wylye on Thursday 21st January at 11.30 am. Family flowers only.

CHAMBERLAIN - Doris (Dunn) B.E.M. Died peacefully on January 11th, aged 93 years. Aunt of Bess, Philip, Darvis, Andrew, Gilly, Anne, Cherry, Delia, Philip, Michael and a loved and respected great aunt. No flowers please but donations most gratefully received by the Millstream Day Centre, Benson to be sent c/o Howard Chadwick Funeral Services, Clockhouse Cottage, Crowmarsh OX10 8ED. Thanksgiving Service at St Helen's *Church, Benson on* Thursday 21st January at 12 noon.

CORNWELL - Joan, on 28th December 1998. Much loved by her many friends. Funeral at St Marks Church, Ampfield, Hampshire, 11.30am on January 21st. Flowers to Steel and Son, 163 Hursley Road, Chandlers Ford, or if preferred, donations to Ampfield Parish Council (Joan Cornwell Memorial Fund), c/o John Murray, 13 Shelley Close, Winchester, SO22 5AS.

CRAIG - Deborah Ann (Debbie) tragically on the 9th January 1999 aged 34 years. Funeral Service 10.30am, Tuesday 19th January at St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Thame, Oxfordshire, followed by interment in St Andrew's Churchyard, Chinnor. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to National Asthma Campaign, c/o Surman and Horwood Funeral Service, 25 High Street, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0AE.

CUMMINS - Mary. Formerly Primavesi (née Fordsmith). Died peacefully 12th January 1999. Service at Guildford Crematorium, Friday 15th January 1999 at 3.30pm.

DAVIES - Beryl Margaret (née Jones), died on 12th January, peacefully at Sutton Lodge Nursing Home, Weybridge, aged 92, formerly of Johannesburg. Much loved mother of Michael and Ann and sadly missed by family and friends. Enquiries to Lodge Brothers, Weybridge. Tel: 01932 854758.

GAILIT - Lydia, born Latvia, March 13th 1910, died peacefully at home, January 11th 1999. Funeral at Mortlake Crematorium, Tuesday January 19th at 2.30pm. Enquiries/flowers to Chelsea F/D, 260b Fulham Road, SW10 9EL. Tel:0171 352 0008.

GORDON - Adam London, Major (ret'd) Royal Norfolk Regiment, on January 9th aged 84, peacefully after a heart attack. Most beloved and loving husband of Hilary and the late Lavender, darling father of Susanna, Joanna, Maryanne and Rosanne and adored grandfather of Toby, Lucie, Camilla, Ayo, Sophie, Anna and Penelope. Funeral at St Mary's Church, Rock Gardens, Brighton, at 11.00am on Tuesday, 19th January, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only please. Donations, if wished, to Action Aid or the NSPCC, care of Teresa Baker, Caring Lady Funeral Director, 155 Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 3LG. Tel 01273 625325. Memorial Service to be announced later.

HALFORD-MACLEOD - Peacefully at Ospadal nan Eilean, Stornoway on 12th January 1999, Giovanna Mary (née Durst), Ardvourlie, Isle of Harris. Devoted wife of Aubrey, much loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Funeral private. Memorial service to be announced in the spring. Donations in lieu *of flowers may be sent to* Alzheimers Association.

HESTER - Allison William Beckett (Tony) died suddenly at home on 8th January. Funeral Service at Southampton Crematorium, 1.00pm Thursday 21st January. Family flowers only, donations if wished to League of Friends, Winchester Hospital, c/o Jno Steel and Son, Ramalley House, 163 Hursley Road, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh.

JOYCE - Derek Hugh Fawcett, CBE, FCIT, formerly of Shell, Mex and BP Ltd, peacefully on January 8th, aged 91. Dearly loved husband of Joyce, father of Brendan, grandfather of Joseph, David and Thomas. Funeral Service at South West Middlesex Crematorium on Friday January 22nd at 11 am. Family flowers only. Donations to Richmond-upon-Thames Talking Newspaper For The Blind, c/o G S Keates & Co, 49 High Street, Hampton Hill, Middlesex, TW12 1NH.

LINNELL - Edna Rosemaria. A founding patron of The Maharishi Foundation. Passed on peacefully at home, on Wednesday 6th January 1999. Funeral on Monday 18th January 1999 at the Church of St Lawrence, Mereworth, Kent at 12.45 pm. Donations in lieu of flowers to the Heart of Kent Hospice, Aylesford. "May God enfold you in His wings of love".

LLOYD-LEWIS - On January 8th, peacefully in hospital, Edward (Lloyd), aged 86. Devoted and much-loved husband of Shirley. Service at St. Mary's Church, Sutton Valence on Tuesday, January 19th at 2.15 pm followed by private cremation. No flowers. Donations, if wished, payable to British Heart Foundation c/o A W Court Funeral Directors, Headcorn Road, Grafty Green, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2AP. 01622 850840.

LYSTER - Peggy (Marjorie Aird, née Everard) JP, suddenly in her sleep on 11th January aged 80. Dearly loved wife of the late John, so greatly loved mother of Simon and Bryony, and proud grandmother of Edwina, Sammy, Lara, Olivia and Thomas. Her funeral is private. A service in her memory will be held at All Saints' Church, Stock, on Monday 25th January at 2.30 pm. Please no flowers. Donations if desired to the Essex Wildlife Trust, Colchester, CO5 7DN.

MARKHAM - Margaret on January 8th at Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, Norwich. Much loved and sadly missed by family and friends. Wife of the late Professor Roy Markham FRS. Funeral at City of Norwich (Earlham) Crematorium on Monday January 25th at 2.30pm. Family flowers only but donations if desired to Norfolk and Norwich Hospital c/o Peter Taylor Funeral Services, 85 Unthank Road, Norwich, NR2 2PE.

McKENZIE - On January 8th 1999, suddenly at his home, James McKenzie FRCS, aged 77 years, of Norton, Stourbridge. Beloved husband of Beauty, dearly loved. Father of Susan and Iain, loving Grandad of James, Richard and Alex. Funeral service will take place at Stourbridge Crematorium on Wednesday January 20th at 2.00pm. Family flowers only please, donations if desired for Mary Stevens Hospice, will be accepted by H. Porter & Sons, 60 South Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 3UJ.

MOND - William Francis Ayres, beloved husband of Bridget and father of Laura Rose, died on Monday 11th January. Funeral at Holy Cross Church, Wilcot, near Pewsey, Wiltshire on Tuesday 19th January at 12 noon. Family flowers only but donations if desired to King Edward VII Hospital, Beaumont Street, London W1.

MORRIS - Air Commodore "Teddy" (Battle of Britain pilot) CB, CBE, DSO, DFC died peacefully at his home in South Africa on 13th January, aged 83. Adored husband of Alison and beloved father of Christopher and Nigel. Private cremation in South Africa. Donations if desired to RAF Benevolent Fund.

MUSSELWHITE - On January 11th, Ian (Herbert Douglas) of Cyncoed, Cardiff. Devoted and much loved husband of Edith Mary. Funeral Service at Thornhill Crematorium Chapel, Cardiff on Wednesday, January 20th at 12.20pm, where family and friends please meet. No flowers by request. All enquiries to James Summers & Son. 01222 484506.

NEEDHAM - Eric Francis, aged 90, on Sunday 10th January 1999 following a brief illness. Dearly loved by his late wife Bertha, daughters Angela and Pamela, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Founder of Phoenix Motors Limited, Gerrards Cross, 1931 to 1997. Funeral on Wednesday 20th January at 4.00pm at Chilterns Crematorium, Amersham. *Enquiries to* Arnold Funeral Service 01753 891892.

OLIVER - Patricia Rosamund (née Douglas) died at Hampden on 12th January 1999, widow of Jack Oliver, beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother. Much loved by all her family and friends. Funeral at St. Mary Magdalene, Great Hampden, nr Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, 2.30pm, Saturday 16th January. Flowers, or donations if preferred to Iain Rennie Hospice at Home, c/o Surman and Horwood Funeral Service, 25 High St, Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 0AE.

PERRY - Elizabeth, on January 10th aged 86. Widow of Lt. Col. Hugh Perry, mother of Richard and Charles. Funeral at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Castlemartin, Pembroke at 12 noon, Wednesday January 20th.

SCANTLEBURY - W.K. LDS, RCS.Eng. "Ken". Devoted husband of the late Erna. Much loved Father and adored as Mofa by his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Died peacefully on 11th January, aged 91 years. Service at 12 noon, Thursday 21st January at Woking Crematorium, Surrey. Family flowers only please. *Donations, if* desired, for Great Ormond Street Hospital c/o Harrison & Son, 40 Harvest Road, Englefield Green, Surrey. TW20 0QT. Tel: 01784 432183.

SILVER - On January 13th, Cecil (Jimmy) at Avon Lodge, Christchurch, after a demanding illness bravely borne. Deeply mourned by his devoted wife Jean, family and many friends.

THORNYCROFT - Colonel Guy Mytton, DL, on 8th January 1999 in hospital after a short illness. Much loved husband of the late Kathleen, father of David and Mark, grandfather of Charlotte, Lucy, Neil and Thomas; and dear friend of Naomi and her family. Cremation private. Thanksgiving Service at St. Chad's, Shrewsbury on 29th January 1999 at 2.30pm. Family flowers only, donations if desired to The Royal British Legion or The Shropshire Regimental Museum Appeal.

WARDEN - Linda formerly Librarian of Royal Veterinary College and of Senate House University of London. Funeral at St Michael's Parish Church, Highgate Village, London N6 on 21st January at 2.00pm. Family flowers only. Donations to Cooksey and Son (0181 883 4844) for North London Hospice or National Arts Collection Fund.

WATKINS - Christopher David; Marine and Landscape Water Colour Artist, died peacefully on 11th January 1999. Much loved friend, father, grandfather and husband. Christopher's body, not his mind, lost it's battle to stay young. Funeral Service 2.00pm 14th January 1999 St Michael's Church, Winterbourne Gunner near Salisbury. A Memorial Service will be held on his birthday in May. No flowers. Donations to Alzheimers Society.

WHITAKER - Sir James died peacefully at Babworth on 13th January after a long illness. Husband of the late Marybeth and father of Shervie and Jack. Private funeral, no flowers but donations, if wished, to Atlantic College. Memorial Service to be announced.

WOODS - Peacefully, at Ayr Hospital on Monday 11th January 1999, Andrew Lithgow, aged 75 (formerly of Argyll Foods Group & Safeways Plc) of Wilson Avenue, Troon. Beloved husband of Cathie, father of Andrew and Kelvin, grandfather and great grandfather of all the family. Family service in Ayr Hospital Chapel on Monday 18th January 1999 at 11.00am and thereafter to Masonhill Crematorium, by Ayr, at 12 noon to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Heart and Stroke Foundation.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

KNIGHT - Barbara Joan who died on the 14th January 1998. Deeply loved. EFM-W. "Her ways are ways of gentleness and all her paths are Peace".

هكذا من الأصل

OBITUARIES

REAR-ADMIRAL OTTO STEINER

Rear-Admiral Otto Steiner, CB, Assistant Chief of Defence Staff, 1966-68, and Chairman, Whitbread Round the World Race, 1972-82, died on December 27 aged 82. He was born on July 8, 1916.

Otto Steiner's passion for sailing was interrupted only by the Second World War. He joined the Royal Naval Sailing Association (RNSA) in 1937, two years after its foundation, and was its Commodore from 1974 to 1977. While Vice-Commodore in 1972 he was the driving force behind the creation of the first Whitbread Round the World sailing race in 1973-74.

Influenced by the circumnavigations achieved by Sir Alec Rose, Sir Francis Chichester and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, Steiner and a few others considered that the RNSA, a large and influential club — today with more than 7,000 members owning nearly 3,000 boats and having a prominent role in the encouragement of sailing — could, with its worldwide connections, institute an adventurous four-stage global yacht race, one of the legs of which would be longer than any previous ocean race. Steiner's ebullient charm and forcefulness helped to interest an outward-looking Whitbread board, whose then president, Colonel Bill Whitbread, took on the sponsorship of this event.

Some 22 yachts from several countries took part, the winner being the Mexican yacht *Sayula II*. Having flown round the world to the various staging ports in order to set up the arrangements, Steiner, with members of the race committee, ran the race from the Royal Albert Yacht Club in Southsea. Unlike the comprehensive satellite-based television and radio contact that was such a feature of the Whitbread race last year, communication was by a single telephone to Portishead radio station, to which yachts were required to report periodically by whatever route proved possible.

Despite two fatalities, the race fulfilled its audacious objectives, and has continued on a four-yearly basis ever since, with Steiner also running the 1977-78 event. RNSA involvement continued until 1992.

Ottokar Harold Mojmir St John Steiner (the Christian names nodded towards family ancestry in the Austro-Hungarian Empire) joined the navy as a public school entry cadet from St Paul's School in 1935. His first sea service was in the cruisers *Orion* and *Southampton*. His war service started in the destroyer *Ilex*, which was credited with the sinking of one of the first U-boats of the war in October 1939. He transferred in January 1940 to the destroyer *Havelock*, commanded by the notable Captain F. B. K. Stevens. The ship played a prominent part in the attack on Narvik during the abortive campaign to prevent the capture of Norway by the Germans in May 1940. *Havelock* provided fire support, which included that from a battery of French Mountain artillery mounted on deck, for two battalions of French Foreign Legion troops in their assault on Bjerkvik, northwest of Narvik.



Steiner: combined a naval career with a passion for deep sea yacht racing

In late May the decision was taken to evacuate Norway in the face of German advances there and in France. *Havelock* and her consorts extracted some 25,000 soldiers and escorted two large convoys of troop transports — one convoy containing six large liners — from Harstad to Scapa Flow and England without loss. This was followed by similar operations to recover elements of the British Expeditionary Force from the French coast near Lorient.

Steiner received a mention in dispatches for his part in the sinking of the Italian submarine *Comandante Faa di Bruno* on November 8, 1940, near Gibraltar.

After a torpedo course at Portsmouth, Steiner was appointed to the cruiser *Frobisher* in the East Indies and was again mentioned in dispatches for his role in the rescue and tow of the French "super-destroyer" *Le Triomphant*. Because torpedo officers were at this time responsible for the Navy's electrics, Steiner spent six months in the electrical department of the torpedo school *HMS Vernon* at Portsmouth before joining his final wartime ship, the cruiser *Superb*, in December 1944.

Having graduated from the naval staff course, Steiner spent two years in Singapore on the staff of the C-in-C Far East Station. He was promoted to commander in 1950 and was second-in-command of the cruiser *Ceylon* and the naval air station at Lee-on-the-Solent. During his first tour as a captain in the Admiralty in 1956, his determination made a significant contribution to the desirable centralisation — against vested interests of the scientific establishment — of underwater weapon research and development at Portland.

He then commanded *HMS Saintes* and the 3rd Destroyer Squadron. When naval adviser to the UK High Commission in Canada in 1961, he presented the Steiner Cup, a trophy competed for between Canadian and British naval sailing teams to this day.

In January 1964 Steiner was in command of the aircraft carrier *Centaur* when, upon their achieving independence, the armies of the newly independent Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda mutinied against their governments. Operations on behalf of Tanganyika had a naval flavour; having embarked a commando of Royal Marines and helicopters from Aden, *Centaur* rushed to Dar es Salaam and with the destroyer *Cambrian* put up a show of force that quelled the mutineers. In the Mediterranean, *Centaur* was also involved in the rescue of survivors from the disastrous fire aboard the liner *Laconia*.

Steiner's last tour was as an Assistant Chief of Defence Staff. He was appointed CB in 1967.

In retirement, he continued to get to sea in a wide variety of roles. He skippered the *Benjamin Bowring*, mother ship of the 1979 Trans Globe Expedition — which circled the globe by way of the poles — and transported the team from London to Antarctica. He was invited to skipper several large yachts over the years and was always available to make up an ocean passage crew. His friendship with a coastal cargo ship captain, charmingly named Billy Budd, enabled him to make a number of deep-sea merchant ship voyages.

Ashore, he was equally active in a wide variety of charitable pursuits, among which were his chairmanship for 20 years of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Benevolent Society.

His marriage, in 1940, to Evelyn Young was dissolved (she died in 1994); he is survived by his second wife Eleanor, the son and daughter of the first marriage and a stepson.

WILLIAM GADDIS

William Gaddis, American novelist, died on December 16 aged 75. He was born on December 29, 1922.

LIKE James Joyce and Herman Melville, to whom he was often compared, William Gaddis demanded a great deal of his readers, and though his work will endure, it will require some endurance also on the part of those who come to it. Yet despite the critical acclaim and numerous awards, Gaddis had relatively few readers, and so stands as one of the best examples of the awkward position that post-modern art enjoys at the close of this century.

The Recognitions, his first book, published in 1955, was almost 1,000 pages long and the reviews were devastating. The notice in *The New York Times Book Review* was among the most generous in considering that Gaddis had "ostentatiously aimed at a masterpiece". Gaddis was then 32 and would not publish again for a further 20 years. To make a living he worked as a speechwriter for corporate executives, wrote publicity for a pharmaceutical company, checked facts for *The New Yorker* and composed film scripts for the Army.

It is fair to say that success and William Gaddis always formed a complicated equation. After an East Coast boarding school, he studied English at Harvard and wrote for the *Harvard Lampoon*. Yet in his senior year he was asked to resign from the university after fighting with the police. He moved to New York, settling into Greenwich Village and became friends with the Beat writers Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac.



Gaddis was often compared to Melville and Joyce

Rejecting the option of a traditional career, he began to travel widely, first through Mexico and Central America (where he joined the rebels in the civil war in Costa Rica), and later throughout Africa and Spain. These experiences, he believed, were vital for the books still to come.

By 1974 *The Recognitions* had achieved near cult status in America, where it was reissued in paperback. Critics such as Tony Tanner began to rank Gaddis alongside Thomas Pynchon as the finest experimentalists alive, and in Tanner's opinion *The Recognitions* was "one of the most important novels written since World War Two". In 1975 Gaddis won the National Book Award for his second novel, *J. R.*

Awards and money (including a MacArthur "genius" grant) made life easier in obvious ways, yet a wide readership never followed. Instead, Gaddis became the darling of the academy, a position which seemed to amuse him. Asked once about an opaque analysis of his work at a literary conference, he said: "What can I do if people insist I'm cleverer than I think I am?"

His third novel, *Carpenter's Gothic* appeared to excellent reviews in 1985. His admirers hoped that at fewer than 300 pages this one might attract a larger audience, winning readers who had previously been intimidated, but it was not to be. *A Frolic of His Own*, published in 1994, won him a second National Book Award.

William Gaddis was married three times. He believed the failures of his first two marriages were the result of the pressures and frustrations of the writing life. In interviews he was blunt about himself and the difficulty of living with someone dedicated to the art of fiction.

Gaddis is survived by two children.

BRENDAN DEVLIN

Brendan Devlin, CB, surgeon, died on December 26 aged 66. He was born on December 17, 1932.

AS THE pioneer of the surgical audit, Brendan Devlin brought a social conscience to the study of the outcomes of such treatment. By establishing the National Confidential Inquiry into Perioperative Deaths, he helped to raise medical standards generally.

In 1982, together with the anaesthetist Dr John Lunn, he set about persuading surgeons around the country to allow the case records of all patients who died within 30 days of an operation to be independently analysed in order to determine the circumstances and whether death might have been prevented. His intention was to expose anomalies that might need correction.

The idea of an open, independent audit was at first perceived as threatening, and many surgeons were reluctant to expose their results lest they be found wanting. But by visiting almost every hospital in the land, where he deployed his articulate Irish charm, he succeeded in persuading virtually every surgeon to co-operate. The first audit appeared in 1987. Showing that some surgical emergencies were less than ideally managed, and so leading to improvements, it became the basis of the now widespread surgical audit.

The son of a general practitioner, Hugh Brendan Devlin spent much of his early life in Ireland, qualifying from Trinity College Dublin in 1957, after winning undergraduate prizes in surgery. After early surgical training in Dublin he moved in the early 1960s, first to Liverpool, where he carried out research leading to an MD thesis, and then to St Thomas' Hospital, London, where he gained extensive clinical training and wrote a second thesis for his Mastership of Surgery.

Among his housemen when he became senior registrar was the young David Owen, who was already considering politics rather than medicine as his ultimate career.

At St Thomas' he recognised the devastating social and psychological consequences that often attended the performance of colostomies, which were then common in cases of rectal cancer. Together with a nursing sister and a medical student, he carried out a detailed inquiry into the aftermath of surgery for rectal cancer in more than 300 patients, concluding, in a paper in the *British Medical Journal* in 1971, that much greater emphasis should be placed on the quality of life after such operations. The consequent creation of specialist stomatherapy nurses has transformed the lives of countless patients. Devlin went on to advise the Department of Health on stoma care. He was a member of the council of the Colostomy Welfare Group and chairman of the British Colostomy Society.

When the time came for him to move on from St Thomas' he applied for a job at the Belfast Royal Infirmary, but on the eve of his interview he was told that despite being the favourite candidate he would not be appointed because he was a practising Roman Catholic. Showing no bitterness at this discrimination, he was appointed instead consultant surgeon in Stockton-on-Tees in 1970, where he turned his attention to the often poor results of hernia repair operations. For 25 years he lectured and wrote about techniques of hernia repair, and was always willing to demonstrate in the operating theatre. In 1988 he published the definitive British textbook on hernia surgery.

With his flair for original thought and his infectious enthusiasm, Devlin was in demand from many organisations. For many years he was associated with the King's Fund, and he was president of the British Association of Day Surgery, the Society for Social Medicine, and the section of surgery of the Royal Society of Medicine, as well as vice-chairman of the *British Journal of Surgery* and an examiner for five universities.

In later years he was closely identified with the Royal College of Surgeons of England. As chairman of the college's examination board, he began a radical modernising of postgraduate surgical examinations. In 1990 he founded the college's department of epidemiology and audit, which he directed for eight years. In this capacity he stimulated and guided a succession of young research workers in evaluating outcomes in areas of surgical practice ranging from prostatectomy to cleft lip and palate. In 1997, he delivered the Hunterian Oration.

Apart from his professional interests, Brendan Devlin had a lifelong interest in politics and was skilled in political debate. Although happy to work with all politicians who shared his concerns, in 1981 he followed his friend and local MP William Rodgers, one of the SDP's "Gang of Four", into the new party, taking the chair at several stormy meetings during the election campaign. At the time of his death he had reason to believe that he might be invited to join the Liberal Democrats in the Lords.

He was a voracious reader with a special interest in biography, and contributed many biographical articles to the medical press. Throughout his career he was supported by his wife Anne, also a doctor, who survives him, together with their four sons, one of whom is the former Conservative MP for Stockton South.

DOM PHILIP HOLDSWORTH

The Rev Dom Philip David Holdsworth, OSB, monk of Ampleforth and former Master of St Benet's Hall, Oxford, died on December 31 aged 77. He was born on July 21, 1921.

DOM Philip Holdsworth was a fearless thinker rather than a man of action. Educated at Ampleforth College, he became a monk there at the age of 18, as the storm clouds of the Second World War were brewing, and remained a loyal member of the Ampleforth community until his death.

Undoubtedly the most formative experience of his life was his eight-year period of study at Oxford, where he read first Greats and then Theology at Blackfriars, sitting at the feet of the important Dominican teachers of the late 1940s such as Victor White. He served steadfastly in several parishes over a number of years, particularly Workingon and Warrington, and he is still remembered with affection at Helmsley, where he was priest-in-charge more than 40 years ago.

It was as a thinker, however, that he had most influence, teaching first theology and then philosophy for a decade at Ampleforth, never authoritarian, but a thoughtful midwife of ideas. For some years he edited the *Ampleforth Journal*. He was responsible for a number of theological and philosophical articles there, including an important short article on the implications of the doctrine of the Assumption for social justice.

Despite his gentle shyness he was a bold thinker, with an independence of mind which occasionally brought him into conflict with his Abbott. He was passionately concerned with justice between nations, campaigning fiercely against nuclear weapons (*The Greenham Common Prayer Book* was prominent on his shelf). At the same time he remained an enthusiastic beagler.

For many years Dom Philip Holdsworth served on the Advisory Commission to the Catholic Bishops' Conference on Justice and Peace. Nevertheless, his emotional aversion to any form of confrontation always made the defence of unpopular causes very costly to him.

In 1980 he was, to his own surprise, appointed Master of St Benet's Hall, Oxford. There he left the more public and formal occasions to others, but concentrated on fostering a largely monastic community with his never-failing kindness and humour. He also made use of the opportunities to revive his longstanding interest in ancient languages, in particular Syriac and Coptic.

In 1987 he suffered a slight stroke in choir, of which he attempted to take no notice, until he was eventually cajoled to hospital by a monk who happened to be a doctor. A couple of years as parish priest of Workington were followed by retirement to the Abbey, where he struggled against a slow decline with Parkinson's disease through the liveliness of his reading and the alertness of his conversation. On the evening before he entered his final coma he was still capable of an animated discussion on the merits of Dom David Knowles's life of Thomas Becket.

ON THIS DAY

January 14, 1935

POLLING IN THE SAAR

No effort was spared to ensure a large turnout for the Saar plebiscite, which resulted in a 90 per cent vote in favour of a return to Germany and an end to the League of Nations regime

BERLIN, JANUARY 13

The day of the Saar plebiscite having at last dawned, the National-Socialist propaganda machine has reached its greatest activity. Press, platform, pulpit, belfry, screen, and microphone have this week combined to produce a patriotic symphony so sustained and overwhelming that the senses are bewildered. History can seldom have known the name of so small a piece of land to have been so often spoken and written as has the name "Saar" in these latter days. The public mind, whether it will or not, can think of nothing else. The infrequent pauses of the wireless are filled with the first notes of the Saar song, *German is the Saar*. The same melody sounds from such church towers as are equipped to play tunes; from the others comes the recurrent pealing of bells. The Reich Bishop, in the phraseology of leadership, ordered that the Saar should form the subject of prayers and the text of sermons in Evangelical churches to-day. The newspapers sing the impending return of the Saar in such inspiring phrases as these: The last night separates the Saar from its day of freedom. This night was lit with the beacons of hope. Lovely and radiant like a bride on her wedding day, the Saar has adorned itself.

The last special trains with voters from Berlin have left the gaily decorated Potsdamer Bahnhof, rousing cheers speeding them on their way. From far Shanghai a belated woman voter has arrived. Her claim to vote, it is explained, was challenged by malevolent Communists, so that when it was finally admitted she had missed the last steamer. So she was conveyed inland by aeroplane, and caught the last Trans-Siberian express, which should have brought her to Berlin on Friday, but was delayed by snow, and she only arrived to-day. General Goring, never at a loss, arranged for a special aeroplane to take her to the Saar, and it is hoped that she has been able to cast her vote. The voters from Germany, about 50,000 strong, were crossing the frontier and making their way to stations in the districts to which they belonged. For the use of all these people the Saar railways had provided 136 special trains which carried them free of charge, and an elaborate service of motor-cars and omnibuses had also been organized. At a village polling station an old soldier dressed in full Prussian military uniform marched in stiffly.

NEWS

Terrorist wanted more deaths

■ Laughing at the memory of those who died, the leader of the terrorist group that kidnapped 16 western tourists boasted yesterday that his only regret was that he had not killed more of his hostages.

As he was dragged into court by dozens of armed police, Abu Hassan shouted: "I did everything in the name of God so I am sorry for nothing. I am very famous now, but let everyone know I only gave orders to kill the men." .... Page 1

Markets hit as Brazil devalues

■ International markets were thrown into turmoil after Brazil's decision to devalue its currency reawakened fears of a global economic crisis. Shares in London and other European markets suffered heavy losses while the dollar took a battering on the foreign exchanges .... Page 1

Santer's fate
The fate of Jacques Santer and his Brussels executive will be decided by the European parliament in censure votes .... Pages 1, 12

Blair's secret
The Prime Minister has taken on the mantle of Diana, Princess of Wales, by making a series of secret trips to hospitals .... Page 1

Hostage freed
The kidnapped British oil worker John Brooke was on his way home after a secret ransom deal was agreed with armed Yemeni tribesmen .... Page 2

Child jail fears
Teams of prison officers in full riot gear will be sent into quell future disorder at Britain's first child jail under plans drawn up by the Home Office .... Page 5

Birt successor
The BBC is expected within days to appoint headhunters to find Sir John Birt's successor as Director-General. The post, worth more than £300,000 a year, will also be advertised in national newspapers .... Page 6

Expensive questions
Passengers telephoning the national rail inquiries service to ask about a journey are being given only the details of the most expensive service, some train companies have claimed .... Page 8

Wrong victim
Six masked IRA men burst into Noel Diver's house and beat him with baseball bats. It was several minutes before they realised that they had the wrong house and the wrong man .... Page 9

Ministers condemned
Senior Labour backbenchers urged the Government to get its act together after strongly condemning ministers for failing to adopt t strict discipline .... Page 10

Health failure
Confusion, duplication and fragmentation of health and social services means elderly and disabled people are failing to get the care they need .... Page 11

Refugee threat
Tens of thousands of Kosovo Albanians, the vanguard of a new European refugee wave, are waiting in Czech boarding houses and farmsteads for their chance to slip into Euroland .... Page 13

Freetown disaster
In Freetown nobody is quite sure where the enemy is, or what he might look like. Much of the city has been razed .... Page 14

Mugabe retracts
President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has been forced by the International Monetary Fund to retract plans for a mass confiscation of white-owned farms .... Page 15

Dr Who overcomes time again

■ Doctor Who has cheated time again. Thirty years after the last print of a much sought-after 1965 episode was thought to have been exterminated, *The Lion*, starring William Hartnell, the original Doctor, has materialised in New Zealand. The BBC wiped the programme from its archives in 1969 and banned its distribution to Arabic-speaking countries .... Page 7

ROY RILEY



Kim Dennis, 26, an IT manager from Coventry, was yesterday named as the Young Woman Engineer of the Year

Job creation: Unemployment fell to reach its lowest level in 18 years, boosting hopes that Britain will avoid a major recession .... Page 25

Sears siege: Philip Green, the entrepeneur who has been laying siege to Sears, the retailer, was attempting to drum up support from shareholders for a hostile bid at 340p a share .... Page 25

***Euro move:** France and Germany* turned up the heat on the European Central Bank, publishing a joint memorandum advocating exchange rate "guidelines" and a cut in interest rates .... Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 183.5 to 5850.1. The pound rose 2.15 cents to $1.6522 but fell 0.08p against the euro to 70.86p. Sterling rose to 99.0 from 98.6 .... Page 28

Football: Terry Venables, the former England coach, is set to give up the managership of first division Crystal Palace because of the club's financial problems .... Page 48

Motor sport: Ford face exclusion from the world rally championship after objections from their rivals about a a non-standard water pump .... Page 46

***Sailing:** Ben Ainslie concluded a remarkable season in Lasers by carry*ing off his first world title with a race to spare .... Page 44

Bryant's Eye: "Today we unmask one of the greatest unsung heroes in the history of British sport, Jim Peters. He is the man who lit the *flame of athletic ambition for thousands of would-be schoolboy champions"* .... Page 44

Sensational Academy: The old accusations of amateurishness and stuffiness can no longer be levelled at the modernised Royal Academy, says Richard Cork .... Page 34

New movies: James Christopher sees Brad Pitt make the Grim Reaper sexy in *Meet Joe Black*, Martin Brest's remake of the 1934 film *Death Takes a Holiday* .... Page 35

New videos: Gary Oldman adds to his list of villainous roles in the effects-laden blockbuster, *Lost in Space*. Plus *Times* critics recommend new classical CDs .... Page 36

Injustice on stage: In London the Stephen Lawrence inquiry is recreated at the Tricycle Theatre, while at Birmingham Rep the Carl Bridgewater murder is imaginatively examined .... Page 37

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: Prostate cancer — its symptoms and advances in treatment .... Page 18

Hume's friends: The leader of England's Roman Catholics can be enigmatic, irritable and stubborn — yet Cardinal Basil Hume inspires a deep love. In the first of a series of extracts from a book by his friends, Ann Widdecombe and Neil Balfour reveal the human side .... Page 19

Reviews: Deborah Moggach wonders at the tale of the extraordinary tulip; John Bayley enjoys the good things of James Wood's essays; Erica Wagner looks for evidence of creative writing classes; John Grigg tastes a "campaign biography" of Peter Mandelson .... Pages 38, 39

Best buys: Celebrate Valentine's Day in a cottage in the English countryside; winter break in a Turkish resort; bargain flights to Australia, Brazil and China .... Page 41

For selfish reasons, we wish that *Michael Jordan had stayed on.* His absence denies us the pleasure of watching one of the world's great athletes and surely the most accom*plished basketball player in history.* His presence might have redeemed this sadly truncated season

— *The New York Times*

Preview: Woodpeckers and orpahn hedgehogs in *Vets in Practice* (BBC1, 8pm) **Review:** There's a war being waged out there in the world of crime 46, 47

Entitlement end
The Government would be wise to seize its opportunity to be more radical while the economy cannot be used as an alibi .... Page 21

Outrage in court
The defence has yet to be heard. But already Malaysian justice is in the dock .... Page 21

Fostering compromise
In the light of the Bramley's plea, the case that they have made and the devotion they appear to have, the authority should now offer to reopen the case .... Page 19

ANATOLE KALETSKY
To blame the recurrent crises in emerging markets, such as Brazil, on speculation and financial contagion is to confuse the symptoms of the disease with its cause .... Page 20

MAGNUS LINKLATER
Big hospitals, which are seen as dinosaurs in today's terms, have had to cut costs and reduce staff numbers, which means that nurses do not have the time nor the expertise for therapeutic care .... Page 20

JAMES WRIGHT
The Dome has become a partisan stunt to prove how well new Labour is doing. The replacement of Peter Mandelson has only emphasised the suffocatingly Blairite nature of the enterprise .... Page 20

PETER RIDDELL
During Peter Mandelson's five months at Trade and Industry he raised the profile of the department and the morale of its civil servants. He put substance into the Blairite rhetoric about creating a new relationship with industry .... Page 10

Rear-Admiral Otto Steiner; William Gaddis, novelist; ***the Rev Dom Philip Holdsworth,*** *monk;* ***Brendan Devlin,*** surgeon .... Page 23

Clinton's trial; EU Commission and the missing millions; "backdoor" euthanasia .... Page 21

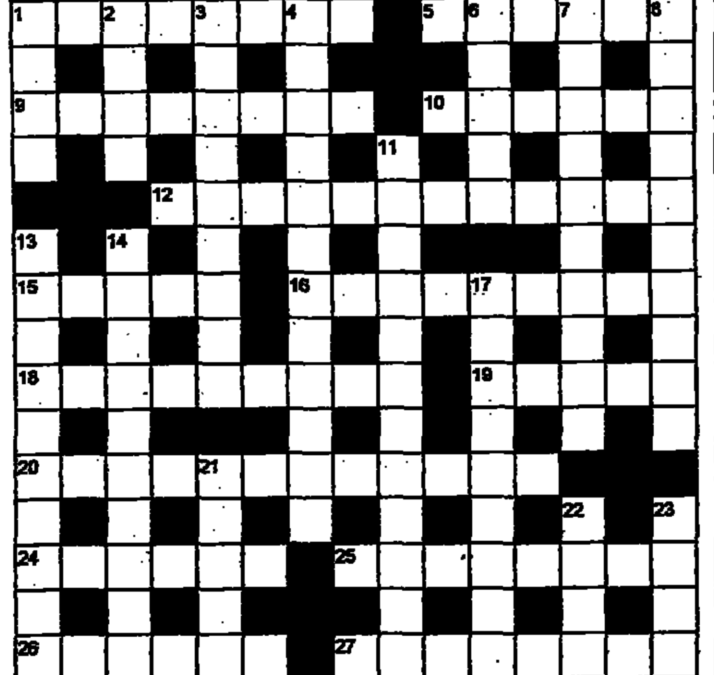
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

MEDIA
■ *Women talk sex in Channel 4's new comedy series, Sex and the City*

EDUCATION
■ Where students do their homework by kerosene lamp: a church school in Tanzania

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,000



ACROSS

1 *Farewell to the double feature* (4-4).
5 A plank on a boat (6).
9 Look back on battle in lists of an*niversaries* (8).
10 The body of the college (6).
12 Token demonstration organised by Duke of York? (12).
15 *Little bounder stumped for some*where to sleep (5).
16 A piece of cake one swallowed during tea, sitting comfortably here (4,5).
18 One taking striking *steps* to entertain (3-6).
19 Veteran hopelessly oiled (5).
20 Go to extremes with such sauce (5,3,4).
24 A good objective and a plan of ac*tion* (6).
25 Port anticipating ship in vain (8).
26 Gossip swallowed by Clement Attlee (6).
27 Can switch to established railway line (8).

DOWN

1 Force thus to give up brandy (4).
2 Bachelor's brief confession in a line of verse (4).
3 Business groups somehow making cast iron without oxygen (9).
4 Fashionable container of French perfume is brilliant (12).
6 High economic growth keeps pound in healthy state ... (5).
7 ... and is often indicated by these signs (10).
8 Daughter is accused but allowed to go (10).
11 A fool may be taken in by this (12).
13 He demonstrates he's a member of church (10).
14 Commendation announced for officers and crew (10).
17 Dish made from game, with end folded over (9).
21 He's left the lady on the lake, giv*ing a sort of wave* (5).
22 Run and hide (4).
23 Spot googly at last by sixth sense (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,999

C	U	P	F	I	N	A	L		W	A	R	S	A	W
O		L		C		P		B		R		I		I
S	T	A	T	E	D	E	P	A	R	T	M	E	N	T
T		C		P		R		S		D		N		H
A	M	E	N	I	T	Y		I	R	E	L	A	N	D
R		C		C				L		C				R
	B	A	C	K	Y	A	R	D		O	U	I	J	A
P		R				C		O				N		W
H	A	D	E	S		C	A	N	O	E	I	S	T	
Y				U		U				X		O		B
S	N	A	P	P	E	R		S	C	H	O	L	A	R
I		D		R		A		H		I		V		O
C	O	M	M	E	R	C	I	A	L	B	R	E	A	K
A		I		M		Y		V		I		N		E
L	O	T	I	O	N		T	E	S	T	A	T	O	R

Times Two Crossword, page 48

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Sun rises: 8.00 am | Sun sets: 4.18 pm

Moon sets: 1.58 pm | Moon rises: 4.54 am

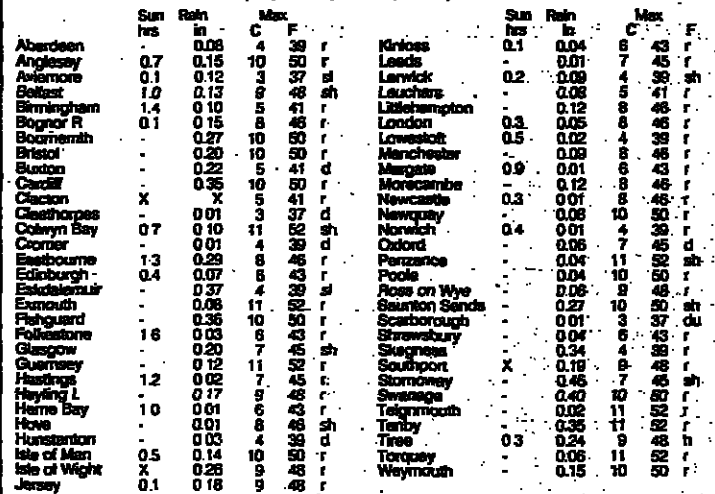
New moon: January 17th

London 4.18 pm to 7.59 am
Bristol 4.29 pm to 8.09 am
Edinburgh 4.09 pm to 8.34 am
Manchester 4.16 pm to 8.18 am
Penzance 4.46 pm to 8.16 am



☐ **General:** Scotland and Northern Ireland windy with wintry showers followed by steadier rain, falling as sleet and snow on hills and mountains. Showers in Wales, and N and W England, then longer periods of rain; snow possible over mountains. Rest of UK will have a few showers. Tonight showers clearing; rain and hill-snow in N and W.

☐ **Lndn, SE, Cent S, E Engld, E Anglia, Chn'l Is:** sunny spells; cloudier later with patchy rain. Mod W wind. Max 8C (46F).
☐ ***Midlands:** sunny spells, a few showers;* cloud, rain later. Mod W wind. Max 8C (46F).
☐ **SW Eng, S Wales, IoW:** a few showers, then rain. Fresh W/SW wind. Max 8C (46F).
☐ **N Wales, NW, Cent N, NE Eng, Lakes:** a few showers, then rain; mountain sleet and snow. Fresh W/SW wind. Max 8C (46F).
☐ **Brdrs, E'burgh & D'dee, A'deen, Moray Frth, NE Sctld, Orkny, Shetld:** wintry showers, sunny spells; then cloud, rain, hill-snow. Strong/gale force W/SW wind. Max 4C (39F).
☐ **G'gow, Argyll:** showers, then heavy rain. Strong/gale-force SW wind. Max 5C (41F).
☐ **SW, NW Sctld, Cent Hghlds:** showers then heavy rain; sleet, snow on hills, mountains. Strong to gale SW wind. Max 5C (41F).
☐ **N Ireland:** heavy rain, then showers. Strong/gale-force SW wind. Max 7C (45F).
☐ **Irish Rep:** rain; then bright, showery. Wind fresh/strong SW turning W. Max 10C (50F).
☐ **Outlook:** milder, windy, cloudy tomorrow; prolonged heavy rain in north. Colder on Sat with blustery showers and sunny spells.



24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

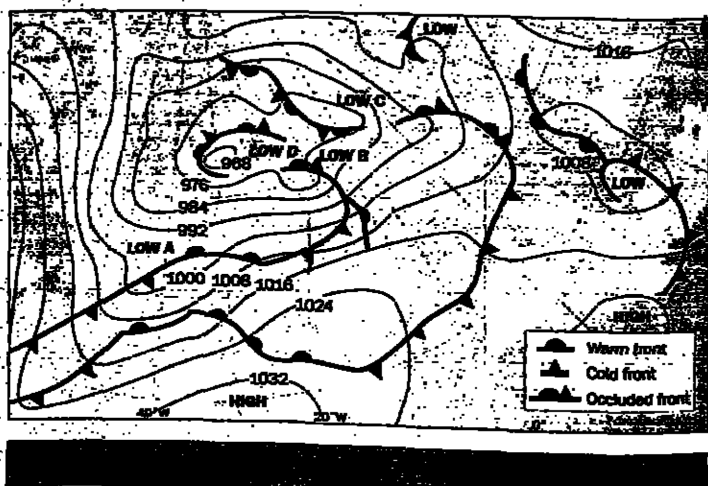
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	-	0.08	4	39	r	Kinloss	0.1	0.04	6	43	r
Anglesey	0.7	0.15	10	50	r	Leeds	-	0.01	7	45	r
Aviemore	0.1	0.12	3	37	sl	Lerwick	0.2	0.09	4	39	sh
Belfast	1.0	0.13	9	48	sh	Leuchars	-	0.08	5	41	r
Birmingham	1.4	0.10	5	41	r	Littlehampton	-	0.12	8	46	r
Bognor R	0.1	0.15	8	46	r	London	0.3	0.05	8	46	r
Bournemth	-	0.27	10	50	r	Lowestoft	0.5	0.02	4	39	r
Bristol	-	0.20	10	50	r	Manchester	-	0.09	8	46	r
Buxton	-	0.22	5	41	d	Margate	0.9	0.01	6	43	r
Cardiff	-	0.35	10	50	r	Morecambe	-	0.12	8	46	r
Clacton	X	X	5	41	r	Newcastle	0.3	0.01	8	46	r
Cleethorpes	-	0.01	3	37	d	Newquay	-	0.08	10	50	r
Colwyn Bay	0.7	0.10	11	52	sh	Norwich	0.4	0.01	4	39	r
Cromer	-	0.01	4	39	d	Oxford	-	0.06	7	45	d
Eastbourne	1.3	0.29	8	46	r	Penzance	-	0.04	11	52	sh
Edinburgh	0.4	0.07	6	43	r	Poole	-	0.04	10	50	r
Eskdalemuir	-	0.37	4	39	sl	Ross on Wye	-	0.08	9	48	r
Exmouth	-	0.08	11	52	r	Saunton Sands	-	0.27	10	50	sh
Fishguard	-	0.36	10	50	r	Scarborough	-	0.01	3	37	du
Folkestone	1.6	0.03	6	43	r	Shrewsbury	-	0.04	6	43	r
Glasgow	-	0.20	7	45	sh	Skegness	-	0.34	4	39	r
Guernsey	-	0.12	11	52	r	Southport	X	0.19	9	48	r
Hastings	1.2	0.02	7	45	r	Stornoway	-	0.46	7	45	sh
Hayling I	-	0.17	9	48	r	Swanage	-	0.40	10	50	r
Herne Bay	1.0	0.01	6	43	r	Teignmouth	-	0.02	11	52	r
Hove	-	0.01	8	46	sh	Tenby	-	0.35	11	52	r
Hunstanton	-	0.03	4	39	d	Tiree	0.3	0.24	9	48	h
Isle of Man	0.5	0.14	10	50	r	Torquay	-	0.06	11	52	r
Isle of Wight	X	0.26	9	48	r	Weymouth	-	0.15	10	50	r
Jersey	0.1	0.18	9	48	r						

Yesterday: highest day max: Torquay, and St Mary's, 11C (52F); lowest: Scarborough, 3C (37F); most rain: Tulloch Bridge, 0.52in; most sun: Folkestone, 1.6hr.

Ajaccio	10	50 f	Cologne	0	32 s	Madrid	5	41 s	Rome	13	55 f
Akrotiri	19	66 s	C'phagn	-2	28 sn	Majorca	9	48 f	Salzburg	-1	30 sn
Alex'dria	19	66 s	Corfu	16	61 s	Malaga	13	55 f	S Frisco	7	45 f
Algiers	17	63 f	Dublin	4	39 s	Malta	17	63 s	Santiago	28	82 s
Amst'dm	1	34 f	Dubrovnik	12	54 f	Melbourne	18	64 s	S Paulo	X	-
Athens	17	63 f	Faro	13	55 s	Mexico C	17	63 s	Seoul	-2	28 s
Bahrain	20	68 s	Florence	8	46 f	Miami	24	75 s	Singapore	31	88 f
Bangkok	30	86 f	Frankfurt	0	32 f	Milan	7	45 c	Stockholm	-7	19 f
Barbados	28	82 f	Funchal	15	59 f	Montreal	-16	3 s	Strasb'rg	-2	28 s
Barcelona	6	43 s	Geneva	0	32 c	Moscow	-14	7 sn	Sydney	24	75 c
Beirut	18	64 s	Gibraltar	13	55 c	Munich	-3	27 c	Tangier	10	50 f
Belgrade	8	46 r	Helsinki	-6	21 sn	Nairobi	27	81 f	Tel Aviv	21	70 s
Berlin	0	32 sn	Hong K	10	50 f	Naples	13	55 f	Tenerife	15	59 f
Bermuda	20	68 f	Innsbruck	0	32 c	N Delhi	11	52 fg	Tokyo	10	50 s
Biarritz	6	43 s	Istanbul	12	54 f	N York	8	46 f	Toronto	-5	23 f
Bordeaux	5	41 f	Jeddah	18	64 r	Nice	10	50 s	Tunis	15	59 s
Brussels	1	34 f	Jo'burg	23	73 f	Oslo	-11	12 c	Valencia	10	50 s
Budapest	3	37 f	L Palmas	17	63 f	Paris	0	32 f	Vanc'ver	8	46 f
B Aires	26	79 s	Le Touqt	2	36 f	Perth	26	79 s	Venice	5	41 f
Beijing	-1	30 s	Lisbon	7	45 s	Prague	-3	27 sn	Vienna	4	39 s
Cairo	21	70 s	Locarno	4	39 f	Reykjavik	1	34 sl	Warsaw	2	36 c
Cape Tn	23	73 s	L Angeles	14	57 s	Rhodes	18	64 f	Washton	13	55 f
Chicago	-8	18 f	Luxmbg	-1	30 f	Rio de J	18	64 f	Wellngton	23	73 X
Ch'church	X		Luxor	4	39 c	Riyadh	17	63 f	Zurich	-3	27 f

Temperatures at midday local time. X — not available

Changes to chart from noon: low A moves NE, deepens. Low B moves NE, merging with low C, and filling. Low D remains in situ with little change



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	11:21	3.8	23:45	3.8
Avonmouth	4:39	10.8	17:02	11.1
Belfast	8:50	3.1	21:05	3.1
Cardiff	4:25	10.1	16:48	10.4
Devonport	3:09	4.8	15:33	4.8
Dover	8:51	5.7	21:21	5.8
Dublin	9:29	3.6	21:54	3.6
Falmouth	2:40	4.6	15:04	4.6
Greenock	10:38	3.0	22:40	2.9
Harwich	9:33	3.3	22:00	3.4
Holyhead	8:17	4.9	20:38	4.8
Hull (Albert D)	3:57	7.4	16:22	7.6
Ilfracombe	3:39	7.5	15:58	7.7
King's Lynn	4:06	5.2	16:38	5.5
Leith	0:12	4.8	12:32	4.8

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Liverpool	8:59	8.0	21:22	8.1
London Bridge	11:37	6.0	23:58	6.3
Lowestoft	7:12	2.2	19:49	2.3
Margate	9:44	4.1	22:09	4.3
Milford Haven	3:54	5.7	16:19	5.8
Newquay	2:50	5.7	15:11	5.8
Oban	3:47	3.4	15:58	3.4
Penzance	2:21	4.7	14:42	4.7
Portland	4:27	1.5	16:42	1.5
Portsmouth	9:15	4.1	21:48	4.1
Shoreham	8:50	5.1	21:21	5.1
Southampton	8:44	4.0	21:14	4.0
Swansea	3:48	10.7	16:15	10.8
Tees	1:14	9.1	13:41	9.3
Walton-On-Naze	9:27	3.6	21:53	3.7

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

هكذا من الأجمل

THE TIMES 2

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



BUSINESS Graham Searjeant says we must avoid a trade war PAGE 29



ARTS The Lawrence inquiry goes a stage further PAGES 34-37



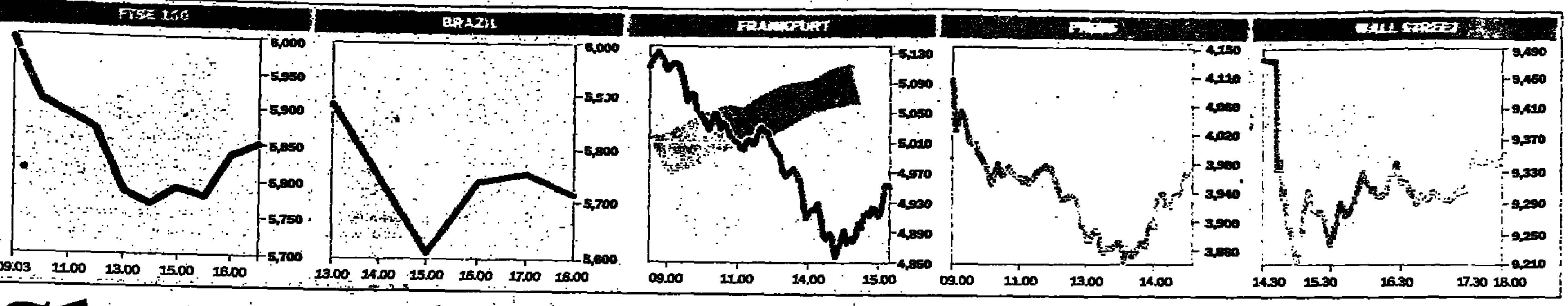
SPORT Venables wage demands cause chaos at Palace PAGES 42-48

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 46, 47

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY JANUARY 14 1999

Investors take cover as Latin American crisis deepens



Shares dive as Brazil devalues

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND OLIVER AUGUST

INTERNATIONAL financial markets suffered heavy losses yesterday after Brazil's decision to devalue its currency revived fears of a Latin American financial crisis.

Shares in London and other European markets fell sharply while the dollar took a battering on the foreign exchanges. But shares on Wall Street confounded expectations of heavy losses with early falls restricted by some heavy retail buying.

The US is regarded as especially vulnerable to a Brazilian crisis because it supplies about 20 per cent of its total exports to the world's eighth-largest economy.

The market turmoil was triggered by the unexpected resignation of Gustavo Franco, President of the Brazilian Central Bank, and the man regarded as the architect of Brazil's tough exchange-rate policy. His resignation was immediately followed by the announcement that Brazil was lowering its exchange-rate band.

Brazil's decision to ditch the focal point of its anti-inflation strategy raised fears that capital flight could spread to other Latin American countries, prompting a re-run of the financial crisis which engulfed Asia a year ago.

Despite denials by Francisco Lopes, the newly appointed Central bank head, traders said the widening of the currency bands to between 1.20 and 1.32 real to the dollar amounted to a *de facto* devaluation. The real immediately dipped to the outer limits of this new band before the Central Bank intervened to prop the currency up at about 1.31 to the dollar.

Traders predicted, however, that with speculative pressure mounting Brazil may devalue again today and said that further moves could leave the Hong Kong dollar vulnerable to renewed speculation.

Trading in the Brazilian stock market was suspended after shares fell 10 per cent within moments of opening. However, stocks later recovered to stand down about 3 per cent amid persistent rumours of government intervention.

In London the FTSE 100 index closed down 183.5 points at 5850.1 — the fourth-largest points fall ever. At one stage, the market was some 287 points lower before a slightly better than expected performance on Wall Street helped to spur a partial recovery.

In New York the Dow Jones industrial average fell 250 points in the first hour of trading but recovered to a loss of between 50 points and 100 points in afternoon trading, clearing the 9,400 barrier again.

The unexpectedly robust performance was attributed to the continued eagerness of US retail investors to plough money into the stock market.

The dollar, however, fell sharply in the currency markets with investors opting for the pound and the euro as perceived "safe havens". The dollar closed down over two cents against the pound at $1.6522 while falling from $1.1575 to $1.1700 against the euro.

Other European stock markets also clocked up huge losses with Frankfurt 4.1 per cent down and Paris ending 3.5 per cent lower. Spanish shares, which are regarded as having the greatest exposure to Brazil, fell 7 per cent, with banking stocks losing up to 14 per cent.

The Brazilian Government and Senhor Franco have repeatedly denied their intention to devalue. However, Senhor Franco said in his resignation speech that he now accepted the need for a more flexible currency and the need to reduce the country's cripplingly high interest rates of 36 per cent. The latest crisis was triggered by the decision last week of Minas Gerais, Brazil's second-largest state, to order a 90-day moratorium on debt payments.

GREGG NEWTON / REUTERS



Brazilian dealers wait nervously during a delay in trading and listen to a speech by the new central bank president

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5850.1	(-183.5)
Yield	2.80%	
FTSE All Share	2665.81	(-77.52)
Nikkei	13403.60	(+42.63)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9297.81	(-176.87)*
S&P Composite	1225.29	(-14.22)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4[illegible]%*	(4[illegible]%)
Long bond	101[illegible]*	(100[illegible])
Yield	5.15%*	(5.22%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5[illegible]%	(5[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	119.51	(118.73)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6495*	(1.6327)
London:		
$	1.6526	(1.6305)
€	1.4121	(1.4126)
SFr	2.2404	(2.2679)
Yen	187.83	(182.29)
£ Index	99.0	(98.6)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.1707*	(1.1576)
SFr	1.3585*	(1.3863)
Yen	113.40*	(112.40)
$ index	104.0	(103.8)

Tokyo close Yen 111.57

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	$11.05	($11.35)

GOLD

London close	$285.45	($289.75)

Exchange rates .... Page 26

* denotes midday trading prices

Investors back BTR merger

BY PAUL DURMAN

SHAREHOLDERS in *BTR* and Siebe overwhelmingly approved the engineering groups' £8.5 billion merger yesterday.

While Siebe's meeting went smoothly, with more than 99 per cent of shares cast in favour of the all-share deal, BTR's meeting dragged on for four and a half hours after confusion about a proposed adjournment.

Better deal, page 29

Unemployment falls to lowest level in 18 years

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

UNEMPLOYMENT fell in December to reach its lowest level in 18 years, lifting hopes that Britain will avoid a major recession.

The figures, however, took the City by surprise and left economists warning that the Bank of England may reconsider its rate-cutting strategy.

The Bank had indicated after the rate cut earlier this month that it was now confident that labour market pressures were easing.

The claimant count measure of unemployment declined by 14,000 to 1.31 million, the lowest level of unemployment since July 1980. The Government's preferred International Labour Organisation measure of unemployment also slipped by 26,000 in the three months to November to total 1.79 million.

Other labour market measures showed surprising strength with employment growth measuring 98,000 in the three months to November taking the total workforce to 27.63 million, a record high.

Only manufacturing employment levels and vacancies revealed any of the expected weakness. The number of people employed in the manufacturing sector slipped by 18,000 in November while the stock of unfilled vacancies fell by 4,000 in December.

Economists said that warm winter weather, allowing greater construction activity than usual, may have been the cause of higher than anticipated employment. However, the consensus remains that these figures will prove no more than a one-off and unemployment will begin to rise in the next few months.

Dharshini David, UK economist at HSBC, said: "These figures should not prevent the Bank of England from cutting base rates further in the next month or two".

Cuny leaves top job at BPB

BY CARL MORTISHED

JEAN-PIERRE CUNY is leaving the top job at BPB, the plasterboard group, adding another company to a long list of troubled firms that have lost their chief executives.

BPB, which was raided by the European Commission in November in an enquiry into suspected price fixing, said yesterday that M Cuny, 58, was taking early retirement.

A statement from the company read: "In the light of the current investigation in to the alleged infringement of Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome within the European gypsum industry, it would be appropriate for a new CEO to take the group forward."

David Leonard, 60, the chief operating officer, will defer his planned retirement by up to one year to fill the empty seat on the board. M Cuny will be retained in a consultancy basis during the investigation. A spokesman said he would be paid £20,000 plus £1,500 for each day's work.

Germany and France warn ECB on rates

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

FRANCE and Germany yesterday turned up the heat on the newly created European Central Bank, publishing a joint memorandum advocating exchange rate "guidelines" and a cut in European interest rates.

Oskar Lafontaine, German Finance Minister, and his French counterpart, Dominque Strauss-Kahn, also continued to push tax harmonisation, urging European governments to give up their tax policy vetoes in the drive for greater economic co-operation.

Herr Lafontaine and M Strauss-Kahn warned the ECB they would consider laying down "general guidelines" for exchange rates if ECB policy resulted in a rapid rise in the euro. "Market participants should know that we would not welcome an excessive rise in the euro," the two ministers said.

However, Herr Lafontaine has softened his exchange rate stance since the autumn with the memorandum containing no mention of his proposals for global "currency zones".

The two Governments also maintained pressure on the ECB over interest rate policy, calling for a more expansionist policy and warning about the risks of deflation.

"The central bank must not adopt a restrictive stance to fight inflation and, if unit labour costs fall, as they have done recently, then interest rates should be cut to prevent deflation," the memorandum said.

Wim Duisenberg, President of the ECB, has repeatedly said that interest rates are likely to remain unchanged for the foreseeable future.

Exchange rate and interest rate policy remain the sole preserve of the European Central Bank and analysts were sceptical that the Franco-German memorandum would make much difference to policy.

Green seeks support for Sears bid

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM
RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

PHILIP GREEN, the entrepreneur who has been laying seige to Sears, was last night seeking support from shareholders in the troubled retail group for a hostile bid at 340p a share.

The bid, which would depend on the support of Phillips & Drew, which holds 24 per cent of Sears, could be launched as early as today. P&D which has to date backed the existing Sears management, refused to comment yesterday.

Sears continued its attempts to evade takeover yesterday by announcing that it has sold its credit card business for £141 million, and will be returning £215 million (141p a share) in cash to shareholders in the spring. It previously said it would return £84 million.

The sale, to Group Cofinoga and Banque Nationale de Paris, and the expectation that Mr Green might go hostile, sent shares in Sears up 25p to 310½p.

Sears appeared to have softened its position on the sale of Freemans, the catalogue business that Sir Bob Reid, its chairman, had insisted he would demerge. A sale for £150 million would allow Sears to return a further 100p a share, making a total of 240p.

Mr Green indicated before Christmas that he might offer 340p for the group, but that it was conditional on due diligence. Sir Bob said yesterday that this undervalued the assets. He said that the property that Sears is currently selling will be worth another 100p a share, equalling Mr Green's total even before Sears' clothing businesses are taken into account. The clothing businesses are Warehouse, Wallis, Richards and Adams children's wear.

Sears also revealed yesterday that like-for-like sales in the clothing division declined 1 per cent in the second half to January 9 by 1 per cent. Freemans' like-for-like sales declined by 5 per cent.

Selfridges, the department store business demerged from Sears last year, said that it had a 3.2 per cent rise in like-for-like sales in the six weeks to January 9. It was helped by perfume and cosmetic sales which rose 12 per cent, while men's clothing sales slipped 1 per cent and women's clothing sales were flat.

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Pressure mounts on Post Office over buy

By Christine Buckley
Industrial Correspondent

THE Government yesterday faced growing controversy over the Post Office's first overseas purchase as concern mounted over the secrecy surrounding the deal and the amount of public money involved.

The Post Office will not say how much it paid for German Parcel — although the figure is thought to be up to £375 million — and neither it nor the Government will say how much public money is being spent.

Ian McCartney, minister with responsibility for the Post Office, told MPs they could work out the cost of the fourth biggest German parcel company from its sales — expected to be £265 million this year — and its other interests, which include 23 per cent of shares in a franchise business working in 30 countries. But that was no more information than the Post Office gave at the time of the deal.

However, a valuation of a business crucially depends on comparitor companies and the profitability of the organisation, which is not being disclosed. Mr McCartney told the Commons that he understood concerns that the Post Office should be accountable for its purchases. He added: "I would stress that other publicly and privately owned European post offices are making acquisitions. We do not know how much they are paying in most instances."

TNT, the rival Dutch distribution business, demanded equal treatment. Anthony Lock, marketing manager, said: "The British Post Office should be at least as accountable as us. We need a level playing field in order to guarantee transparency."

UPS is challenging a similar undisclosed purchase by Deutsche Post at the European Commission. If successful it is likely to go on to challenge the UK Post Office.

Richard Page, Conservative spokesman on the Post Office, condemned the way the Government had given the Post Office more commercial freedom while keeping it in public ownership as a "policy fudge".

A spokeswoman for the Department of Trade and Industry said some details of the German deal would be reported in the Post Office's accounts, which are submitted to the Government. However, she said they were likely to be vague.

GREG BAKER / AP



Three Chinese soldiers were among the first people to try out furniture at a new Ikea store in Beijing, which was officially opened yesterday. It is Ikea's second in China after its Shanghai store opened last year. The Swedish furniture manufacturer aims to expand in Russia, where it has plans for Moscow and St Petersburg, and Asia. Last year Anders Moberg, chief executive, said the company had to alter its methods for the Chinese market to reflect the fact that most Chinese live in very small apartments. The company says its mission is to make furniture for people who want to "create a better life".

Lucent Technologies agrees $20bn takeover of Ascend

From Oliver August
in New York

LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES has agreed to buy Ascend, the manufacturer of phone switching equipment, for $20 billion (£12.3 billion) in a deal that could trigger further industry consolidation.

In the two years since the group was spun off by AT&T, Lucent has initiated 18 takeovers in an effort to outflank its rival Cisco, the $150 billion Internet hardware maker.

Fuelled by takeovers and the exploding interest in Internet technology, Lucent's share price has doubled since October going from $50 to $100. Lucent currently has a market value of $136 billion and will vault past Cisco once the Ascent deal is approved and completed.

Each share of Ascend will be converted into 0.825 Lucent shares under the merger agreement. Wall Street welcomed the deal but gave warning of risks.

Analyst predict that Lucent could reshape the future of the market for telecommunications equipment. It is currently being besieged by phone companies who are hurriedly trying to add Internet capabilities to their networks.

Lucent is one of the oldest suppliers of the traditional equipment used by phone companies. The combination will be by far Lucent's biggest acquisition to date.

Analysts also said that one of the problems that Lucent faces is retaining staff. In the wake of previous acquisitions, key staff at the acquired companies have left soon afterwards and made integrating the businesses difficult.

Ascend was formed in 1989, and first made a name for itself with a product called a remote access concentrator. That device, which cost tens of thousands of dollars, allowed hundreds or even thousands of remote computers to connect to a network over telephone lines.

Previously, each of those lines had required a separate modem to make a link, and the breakthrough by Ascend made the company a fixture and force in the market.

In 1997 Ascend significantly broadened its product line with the $3.7 billion purchase of Cascade Communications, which made a line of high-speed networking gear using a technology called Asynchronous Transfer Mode, or ATM.

Bob Bellman, an analyst with Brooktrail Research, said: "Lucent needs the gear and the credibility in the market that Ascend can bring them. But I don't know if they can pull it off. Lucent is such a big company; it may just eat up Ascend and not produce very much."

Daniel Briere, an analyst at Telechoice, said: "The perception is that it is going a lot better than people had expected. There's a good culture fit."

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BAA records recovery in Asian traffic

AIR traffic to Asia is recovering from its collapse at the beginning of last year, as East Asian economies begin to recover and tourists take advantage of the fall in local currencies (Carl Mortished writes).

Figures reported yesterday by BAA show a 4.8 per cent rise in traffic on Far East services. Overall, BAA's airports experienced a 7.7 per cent gain in passenger numbers over December 1997. Traffic for the full year in 1998 was up 7 per cent to a record 110.6 million passengers. Stansted is still BAA's fastest-growing airport, with 41 per cent more passengers than in December 1997.

David Field, marketing director of BAA, sees the delivery of new transit trains at Stansted

IPC to shed 600 jobs in shake-up

By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

IPC Magazines, the UK's biggest consumer magazine publisher, yesterday announced a radical restructuring and about 200 redundancies designed to save £6 million a year.

The changes, coming a year after the £860 million management buyout from Reed Elsevier backed by Cinven, followed a review of the business.

Each of the five IPC publishing groups - woman's weeklies, TV weeklies, SouthBank, country and leisure, and music and sport, will become separate subsidiaries with their own boards and budgets. The aim, said Mike Matthew, chief executive, was to help to make the group "more entrepreneurial and fleet of foot".

Most of the redundancies are expected to come from the ranks of middle management.

"We are trying to focus as much as possible away from the fighting troops, the ad sales force and the journalists," said Mr Matthew who conceded however he could not guarantee there would be no journalist or advertising job losses.

The restructuring will cost about £5 million but IPC believes that annualised saving of £6 million will be achieved.

The IPC titles range from *Country Life* and *Loaded* to *TV Times* and *Marie Claire*.

Major withdraws from B&B board campaign

By Caroline Merrell

STEPHEN MAJOR, the carpetbagger trying to force the Bradford & Bingley to become a bank, has unexpectedly withdrawn his nomination to be elected to the board.

However, a resolution put forward by Mr Major proposing Bradford & Bingley's flotation, which would result in an estimated £1,000 windfall to each of the society's 2.5 million members, will be voted on at the society's annual meeting in April.

Mr Major, 35, a quantity surveyor turned plumber who lives in Co Antrim, said he had withdrawn his board nomination because he feared that that he would be subjected to too much public scrutiny.

He said: "I think that everyone would have concentrated on me rather than on the resolution." Mr Major said he had already been stung by comments casting doubt on his surveyor's qualifications.

He said he wanted the society to convert because he felt that it was a route that Christopher Rodrigues, its chief executive, would take. He said: "He is just building up the assets of the society so he can float it."

Bradford & Bingley is one of seven societies under siege by members trying to force conversion. The other six have received board member applications and resolutions from Michael Hardern, who last year failed by the narrowest of margins to force Nationwide, the UK's biggest building society, to float.

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Liffe trades fall as dealers pick Eurex

By Richard Miles

TRADING volumes on Liffe, the international futures and options exchange, fell 7 per cent last year as dealers switched their allegiance to Eurex, a rival trading system based in Frankfurt.

A 37 per cent increase in the daily trading of short-term interest rate contracts (Stirs) failed to offset a considerable loss of business in German bund futures during the second half of 1998.

On a more positive note, the value of average daily trades rose 22 per cent to £220 billion, a record performance that reflected the exchange's growing dependence on Stir contracts as the level of bond business diminished.

Liffe has lost ground to Eurex because of its determination until last year to stick with open outcry trading, even though electronic dealing is not only less expensive, but permits firms to carry out business remotely.

The exchange introduced its own version of screen-based trading for equity options, Liffe Connect, at the end of November.

BASF plans €1bn share buyback

BASF, the chemicals group, is planning a one billion euro (£700 million) share buyback, the largest capital repayment in Germany to date. The cash-rich company said it would begin buying immediately and BASF shares gained 1 per cent in a falling German stock market. The company said it would initially buy up to 5 per cent of its capital, representing some 31 million shares. In a statement yesterday the company said: "In BASF's view the price of the company's shares is significantly too low, which means that the present time is particularly favourable for a purchase."

BASF had cash resources of DM3.9 billion at the end of the third quarter and analysts speculated that the weak outlook for the chemicals industry left it with few investment opportunities. However, a spokesman said that the buyback was not an indication that the company had ruled out acquisitions. "We have always been a cash-rich company and we will still have the financial capacity to do deals." BASF had signalled to shareholders last March its intention to buy back stock but the Government's recent decision not to tax such transactions prompted a flurry of buyback moves, including those by BFG Bank and Schering.

House prices up 1%

HOUSE prices in the UK rose 1 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1998, according to the Halifax house price index, slightly below the 1.3 per cent rise of the third quarter. The sharp regional divergence in house price inflation seen over the past two years has started to level off in the second half of 1998, although the North/South divide is still evident with inflation about 9 per cent in the South compared with 2 per cent in the North. House prices in the North fell 1.5 per cent and by 1 per cent in Northern Ireland, while prices rose 3.2 per cent in the South East.

Arnault rules out bid

BERNARD ARNAULT, chairman of LVMH, has ruled out a full takeover bid for Gucci in the short term, saying he is content with being the largest shareholder in the Italian fashion house. Shares of Gucci, which have shot up 55 per cent on takeover speculation, fell 5 per cent in Amsterdam yesterday. M Arnault said: "LVMH makes clear that it does not plan, under the current circumstances, to launch a bid" — but said he now owns more than 15 per cent after adding Prada's 9.5 per cent to the shares LVMH has snapped up on the market.

Germany index move

GERMANY'S premier stock index will no longer be calculated on the floor of the Frankfurt stock exchange. The move forms part of a shift to electronic trading. In future, the Xetra DAX index of 30 shares, which is calculated on the basis of electronic dealing, will be the leading measure of Germany's stock market. Currently the two indices run parallel to each other. Frankfurt's stock market is now dominated by electronic trading. Lack of volume has hurt the old DAX index, reducing its ability to measure market sentiment.

DTI seeks Creative order

THE Department of Trade and Industry has applied to the High Court to wind up Creative Independent Productions, a film production company based at the Elstree Film Studios, after a DTI investigation. The DTI said it was acting in the public interest after Creative had embarked on a scheme to raise finance from the public for the production of a science fiction film named *The Return*. The Court yesterday appointed the Official Receiver as provisional liquidator of the company, pending a full hearing on January 20.

Radio joint venture

Chris Evans and his Ginger Media Group will today announce a joint venture with Unique Broadcasting to create a radio production company, G One. The aim is that the new company will become a major player in the independent radio production sector. The Ginger Media Group was formed last year in an £85 million deal that put together Ginger Productions and Virgin Radio. Unique produces the Pepsi Chart Show for commercial radio and the Richard Allison evening programme for BBC Radio 2.

Limelight recovering

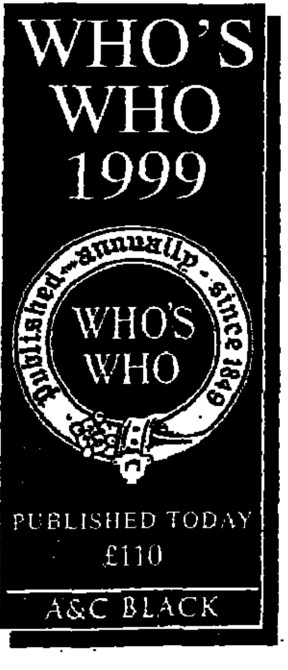
LIMELIGHT, the home lighting company, said its recovery well under way with underlying sales up by 8 per cent during the first two weeks of its January sale. Trading conditions remain tough, and it remains too soon to draw conclusions. Limelight is expected to make an £8 million profit this year, after falling £12.3 million into the red last time. The company was founded in the 1970s by the late Stephen Boler, who made £50 million when it joined the market at nearly 200p a share in 1996. The shares added 3p to a four-month high of 33½p.

Changes at Paribas

PARIBAS, the French financial group, often criticised by analysts for having a complicated and unwieldy structure, said it was reorganising in an effort to improve profitability. Paribas said it was bringing together its different activities into four core business lines. Paribas Principal Investments (PAI), its own industrial investment holdings, would be separated from its core investment banking business. The four core business lines will be investment banking, propriety investments, asset management and retail financial services.

EasyJet's first profit

EASYJET, the low-price airline, yesterday reported its first profit on a 65 per cent increase in passengers. For the year to September 30, pre-tax profit was £2.32 million, from a loss of £3.3 million last time. The airline flew 1.7 million passengers and reported a turnover of £77 million, up 67 per cent. EasyJet said that Internet bookings have risen to 40 per cent of total bookings during promotional periods. The airline is to take on eight new Boeing 737-300s, boosting its fleet strength to 20. Another 15 Boeing aircraft, 737-700s, will join in late 2000.



Wembley's big match for Guinness Mahon

By Jason Nissé

THE Football Association has appointed Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank, as adviser to raise the £200 million it says it needs to redevelop Wembley Stadium.

The move comes after the FA agreed a £103 million deal to buy the site from Wembley, the quoted company that owns the site. The purchase, which is being funded by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, has been under discussion since April.

Bob Stubbs, chief executive of the English National Stadium Development Company, the FA subsidiary that will buy the stadium, says that the redevelopment will be funded by debt finance. He said that the ENSDC would apply for planning permission for the site in the summer.

The sale has still to be approved by Wembley shareholders. A circular is due to go out to them early next month for an extraordinary meeting later in February.

Three non-executive directors of the company, Peter Mead, Jarvis Astaire and Roger Brooke, have said that they object to the deal and Enic, the football investment company, has indicated last week that it may make a 418½p a share bid for Wembley.

Enic, which was founded by Joe Lewis, the Bahamas-based billionaire, refused to say whether the agreement to sell the stadium to the FA would change its position on whether it would now make a bid for Wembley.

The company's shares fell 22p to 351½p, largely on fears that Enic would withdraw from the fray.

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Chiroscience wins US support for anaesthetic

By Paul Durman

CHIROSCIENCE, the drug development company, has won official backing for its local anaesthetic to be approved in the United States but it may struggle to differentiate the product from the market leader.

The Cambridge company claims Chirocaine is a safer version of Astra's bupivacaine, sold as Marcaine, and is less likely to cause the heart to slow to a stop. An advisory committee to the US Food and Drugs Administration agreed that Chirocaine was safe and effective, but most panel members were unconvinced of its advantages over the Astra drug.

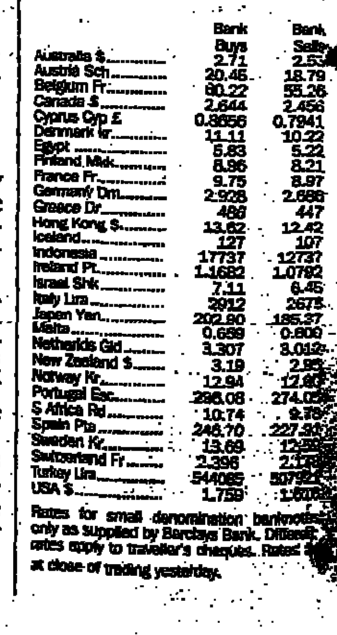
According to a detailed account of the FDA panel meeting in *BioCentury Extra*, an FDA medical officer concluded: "There is no clear evidence that [Chirocaine] differs substantially from bupivacaine in cardiovascular toxicity."

An FDA statistician said Chiroscience's data were consistent with its claims but "the same data can be used to draw a different conclusion".

John Savin, analyst at Greig Middleton, said: "This could be just a pyrrhic victory for Chiroscience. I don't see anybody investing really hugely in it unless there's a significant safety claim."

However, John Padfield, Chiroscience's chief executive, the committee's recommendation for Chirocaine's approval was "extraordinarily positive" and was broader than the recent Swedish approval.

Chirocaine is regarded as the first important new pharmaceutical to emerge from the UK's biotech industry. Dr Padfield hopes it will be on sale in the US later this year.



	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.71	2.53
Austria Sch	20.45	18.79
Belgium Fr	60.22	55.26
Canada $	2.644	2.456
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8656	0.7941
Denmark Kr	11.11	10.22
Egypt	5.83	5.22
Finland Mkk	8.96	8.21
France Fr	9.75	8.97
Germany Dm	2.928	2.686
Greece Dr	486	447
Hong Kong $	13.62	12.42
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	17737	12737
Ireland Pt	1.1682	1.0782
Israel Shk	7.11	6.45
Italy Lira	2912	2675
Japan Yen	202.90	185.37
Malta	0.659	0.609
Netherlds Gld	3.307	3.012
New Zealand $	3.19	2.95
Norway Kr	12.94	[illegible]
Portugal Esc	296.08	[illegible]
S Africa Rd	10.74	[illegible]
Spain Pta	248.70	[illegible]
Sweden Kr	13.69	[illegible]
Switzerland Fr	2.396	[illegible]
Turkey Lira	544085	[illegible]
USA $	1.759	[illegible]

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates [illegible] at close of trading yesterday.

Markets go through the flaw



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Is this the beginning of the end for the bull market? The FTSE 100 staggered back from its biggest ever points fall but was still left looking groggy. That events in Brazil could trigger such drastic reactions in the world's stock markets highlighted what the bears have been bellowing for many months: prices are horribly fragile, the levels unsustainable on any previously known criteria and a fall inevitable.

Brazil's precarious financial predicament has been a dark cloud on the world's investment screens for many months. Yesterday it took on a more defined and threatening shape and cast shadows from Latin America onto the United States, and thence Europe. The prospect of the US economy succumbing to reality is the one that brought the UK market up with more of a start than the fallout in the Far East or Russia could ever have done. This was worse than the summer slip back or the ructions over Long Term Capital Management. This time, investors were genuinely scared.

And with good reason. Never mind the irrational exuberance which perturbed the Federal Reserve's Alan Greenspan, plain irrational is what best describes the current stock market ratings. While a superficial glance will say that the FTSE 100 is showing but a moderate gain on a year ago, that has been achieved largely thanks to the extraordinary performance of pharmaceuticals and telecoms shares. The latter have more than doubled since the beginning of last year, and they did not start from a lowly base.

Those who would believe that the stock market would continue powering onwards and upwards cannot find justification in such old fashioned ideas as earnings. As companies which have yet to turn a profit power into the FTSE, the optimists are reduced to quoting the "weight of money" argument. Institutions have oodles of cash flowing into their coffers and they have to put it somewhere, goes the argument. But it is flawed. Already the institutions are shunning small cap stocks in favour of the biggest FTSE companies: the small cap index has come nowhere near regaining its peak of last spring, and is still around 25 per cent below it.

If they are already confining themselves to investing in only a few stocks, there must be a point at which the institutions admit to being over-weight in them. At that stage — and it must be imminent — they just have to find somewhere else to put the cash. There is little to suggest that they will opt for other stocks and property may, once again, attract more attention.

When a business such as Dixons can have its shares so favourably re-rated on the basis that it is giving away Internet access, it is time to call a halt to such stock market madness. The Internet may be exciting but investing institutions, and, more importantly, their savers, cannot afford to ignore fundamentals.

Hard lesson in cash Creation

Has Sir Bob Reid found enough cash to buy him his shareholders' support? It is amazing what positive effects the hot breath of a bidder can have, even on those who, like Sir Bob, prefer to deny the existence of such a phenomenon. So yesterday Sir Bob chalked up a first in producing a deal that actually exceeded market expectations. But while the looming presence of Philip Green may have turned the former rail chief into a consummate deal-doer and whizzy retailer, even the most ardent believer in the Second Coming would have to accept that the odds are not encouraging.

Sir Bob has achieved a good price for Creation, Sears's credit card business, and he will shovel it out to shareholders as quickly as he can. Long-suffering Sears investors could grab the 141p a share and aim to put it somewhere rather safer than Sears has been. That, however, would still leave them to put their faith in Sir Bob to either demerge or sell Freemans and squeeze a better return out of the retail chains that remain in the group. Given that Freemans is but a leaflet-sized version of the catalogue business it once was — sales down a further 5 per cent, Sir Bob admitted yesterday — the price must be heading south even if he could find a buyer. To attempt the promised demerger would seem to pose a daunting task for the most adventurous prospectus writer.

Similarly, the retail chains have seen sales slipping backwards. Life is tough in the high street and there is little reason to think that it is going to get any easier for the next couple of years. Sir Bob may contend that Sears is worth well over the 340p that Philip Green has proposed but, if Mr Green puts his cash on the table, shareholders will have to weigh up whether they will feel more comfortable with his money in the bank or Sir Bob's promises in yet another annual report that promises to enhance shareholder value.

The stock market's plunge yesterday might well encourage investors towards the relative safety of cash. The chairman may have no difficulty in putting a value of more than £5 on the company but Sears's own brokers struggled to come up with much more than 325p a share. Without the prospect of a bid, the price might be expected to sink back closer to the lowly levels at which it was lurking before Mr Green appeared on the scene. The Reid valuation relies on optimism, but shareholders have had a miserable experience.

A Major move in the right direction

Typical. It takes ages to get hold of a plumber, then once he turns up you find that he is not able to complete the job.

It would be easy to categorise Stephen Major, the plumber-cum-quantity surveyor who is leading the battle to convert Bradford & Bingley into a bank, as a man of straw. Why else would he withdraw from the fray at a crucial moment? But before Chris Rodrigues starts popping the champagne corks, he might consider whether this is a strategic withdrawal by Mr Major. Maybe the chances of B&B's members voting for conversion have been enhanced by his decision not to stand for the board.

This is not to do down Mr Major: he is probably more blameless than most plumbers. And we can surely discount suggestions that B&B might contemplate hiring private detectives to probe cupboards in search of skeletons. But there is no doubt that the publicity about Michael Hardern's freelance butlering, and the photographs of him in a Britannia building society wearing a sarong, did not aid his fight to convert the Nationwide into a bank.

Too many voters identified the campaign with Mr Hardern's eccentricities. As it was, Nationwide only remained a building society by the narrowest of margins. Mr Major's decision to withdraw allows the B&B members to concentrate on the issues, which should make this fight a better indicator of the future of building societies than the Nationwide vote.

Pint-sized problem

WOLVERHAMPTON & Dudley Breweries is not alone in shedding the odd tear into its beer over disappointing sales. A company faced with fending off a Pac-Man defence to its bid for Marston, Thompson & Evershed might have hoped for more bullish bullets but it can blame the market for the hiccup. Yet W&DB has indicated why Marston's, owner of the trendy Pitcher & Piano chain, could not countenance the takeover. Oh, the indignity of being bought by a company that has "wet-led managed concepts".

Whitbread and Nomura calm investor nerves

By Dominic Walsh

INVESTOR nervousness, sparked by Allied Domecq's surprise profit warning, was allayed yesterday as both Whitbread and Nomura's Unique Pub Company painted a less gloomy picture of Christmas trading.

Shares of Whitbread edged 8p higher to 775½p as the brewing and leisure group reported that sales during December were slightly ahead of last year. However, Allied's woes continued as its shares lost a further 19p to 497p, taking the total loss over two days to 100½p — equivalent to more than £1 billion off its market value.

In a trading statement, Whitbread said that while comparable sales in food-led pubs and restaurants had been affected by the slowdown in consumer spending, its hotel and leisure divisions were continuing to exhibit growth.

Analysts estimated that its drinks-led outlets had seen a 1 per cent decline in like-for-like sales against a market down 2 per cent. However, both its Travel Inn and Marriott hotel chains improved while comparable profits from its David Lloyd Leisure clubs rose by about 7 per cent.

David Thomas, chief executive of Whitbread, said: "The spread of our businesses and our strong brands give us a degree of protection in continuing difficult trading conditions."

Meanwhile, Giles Thorley, chief executive of the 2,600-strong Unique Pub Company, said there had been a "healthy pick-up in trade" in the two weeks before Christmas. He added: "Volumes in our pubs showed a couple of percentage points growth compared with last year."

Lower down the scale, Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries said that after a slow start in October and November, trade has strengthened over Christmas and the new year. Like-for-like liquor sales grew by 2.6 per cent and total retail sales were up 1.8 per cent, with its community pubs performing particularly well.

David Thompson, W&DB's managing director, cautioned that the trading environment remained tough, but the company was keeping a tight rein on costs.

Analysts believe that Wolves will this week increase its £262 million bid for Marston, Thompson & Evershed, its Midlands rival, which last week launched a £330 million counterbid for W&DB. The potential cost-savings from such a move are crucial to Mr Thompson's arguments and he is expected to revise his previous £12 million estimate upwards.

His strategy of retaining all three breweries was lent support by Scottish & Newcastle, which contracts out some of its brewing to Wolves. Tom Ward, brewing director for Scottish Courage, said W&DB was achieving excellent unit costs adding: "It runs a pretty good operation."

Tempus, page 28


Will Hobhouse said that Whittard had faced a difficult year with customers being more careful in their shopping

Warning knocks Whittard

SHARES in Whittard of Chelsea, the tea and coffee retailer, fell by 22 per cent yesterday after the company issued a warning that profits for the year will be below market expectations because of a "continued tough trading environment" (Matthew Barbour writes).

Shares in the group, which moved from the Alternative Investment Market to the full market just over a year ago, fell 20p to 71p.

Whittard, which owns more than 100 outlets in the UK and has franchise stores overseas, said discounting to protect sales volumes had resulted in a margin squeeze.

Like-for-like sales for the year to date are 2.5 per cent lower than last year although total sales rose 11.2 per cent. For the year to May 31, 1998, pre-tax profits were £3 million on sales of £32.4 million, when the shares hit a high of 231p.

Will Hobhouse, managing director, said: "It's been a difficult year; customers have been more careful in their shopping."

Internet fever sends Dixons' shares higher

By Sarah Cunningham

SHARES of Dixons shot higher yesterday as the craze for Internet-related stocks crossed the Atlantic.

The company said it had attracted 900,000 users to Freeserve, its free Internet service, launched four months ago. Hopes that it will be able to make large profits from the business through third-party agreements and advertising propelled the stock's rise to a record high of 958p, a rise of 44p.

John Clare, chief executive, said that Freeserve will break even this year. From then on, he said: "Profitability will be linked to the growth of the Internet. Internet trading is growing and Freeserve puts us in a strong position. It opens up a whole host of opportunities such as financial services, travel agencies, hotel bookings." Such services would be offered through deals with third parties, he said.

Richard Edwards, retail analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, said "There is a scarce supply of Internet plays. Dixons is worth 800p from a straight retail point of view, the problem is how do you value Freeserve?"

Wall Street has been gripped by Internet fever since a number of electronic commerce companies reported strong Christmas sales. With many of the stocks now on very high valuations, the Wall Street buying frenzy has tapered off this week, with some Internet stocks taking a tumble.

Dixons reported that pretax profits for the six months to November 14 were £80.9 million (£77.1 million), excluding a £12 million charge to cover the cost of integrating the retail business of Seeboard, which it acquired last year. The company is paying an interim dividend of 3.5p (2.9p) from basic earnings that fell to 11.6p a share from 12.5p.

The company said sales of personal computers, computer games and mobile phones had been strong over Christmas, but sales of domestic appliances were slow.

Ice Box, page 29

BA agrees Japan Airlines tie-up

By Carl Mortished

BRITISH AIRWAYS has agreed to a marketing and code-sharing tie-up with Japan Airlines aimed at increasing BA's access to the important air travel market in the northern Pacific. JAL is expected to join BA's Oneworld Alliance, which includes Cathay Pacific and Qantas

BA said that the two airlines had agreed to link their frequent-flyer programmes and schemes and do code-sharing on their routes. BA cut back its exposure to the Japanese market last year, ending flights to Osaka. The airline said yesterday that the link-up with JAL would increase access to the Japanese market without the need to invest in new routes.

BA's existing frequent-flyer link with rival Japanese airline ANA will cease on September 30. ANA, which has extensive domestic routes in Japan, has said it intends to join the rival Star Alliance, led by Lufthansa.

BA shares rose 5p to 401p yesterday, against the sharp stock market fall. However, they remain at a big discount to last year's high of 703p, struck before the beginning of Asia's financial crisis.

Chemicals firms face slowdown

EUROPE'S £264 billion chemical industry is set for a slowdown in 1999 under pressure from rising imports and threatened by macroeconomic factors, the Chemical Industries Association (CIA) forecast yesterday.

The CIA said European production is expected to match a 1998 forecasted rise of 2 per cent, which was revised down from last year's 1998 prediction of 3.5 per cent.

The CIA, which represents about 200 British chemical producers, said its members were threatened by the strong pound and economic malaise.

BP backs tax to cut carbon emissions

By Carl Mortished

BP Amoco, Britain's largest oil company, said yesterday that energy taxes should play a role in providing incentives to reduce carbon emissions.

Rodney Chase, deputy chief executive, said that emissions trading was the most economic and effective way to reduce emissions. However, in a speech to the Fabian Society, he conceded that a tax that rewards corporate behaviour could play a role in meeting Kyoto targets on carbon emissions. His remarks are likely to fuel controversy in an industry that is deeply divided over global warming. The Kyoto Protocol, which sets out targets for the reduction in carbon emissions, has aroused fierce opposition from US oil majors, led by Exxon, who reject the need to curb fuel consumption and pour scorn on suggestions that fossil fuel burning is a cause of climate change. Until recently, Amoco was an opponent of Kyoto but BP has spoken out in favour of measures to reduce carbon emission, closely followed by Shell. Energy taxes would be likely to hurt the oil majors with large capital intensive and fuel-consumptive plant.

FI chief sells £6m shares

By Fraser Nelson

HILARY CROPPER has cashed in on the phenomenal success of FI Group by selling £6.6 million of shares in the computer services company.

The chief executive of FI Group has joined Steve Shirley, its founder, and five other directors to sell a total £21.7 million of shares as the company returned a 75 per cent rise in interim profits.

Mrs Cropper said she has not sold for a year, and has promised not sell any more until January 2000. She said: "When you have most of your worth tied up in the place that you work, you inevitably want to take some profit. You have families, and you are working for them — not for some esoteric reason."

Shares of FI Group fell 2p to 325p yesterday as it said its order book has almost doubled to £253 million (£136 million).

The shares have risen from 48½p in 1996, peaking at 329p earlier this week.

A stream of new long-term contracts from London Electricity, Halifax and Marks & Spencer helped pre-tax profits to £7.54 million (£4.31 million) for six months to October 31.

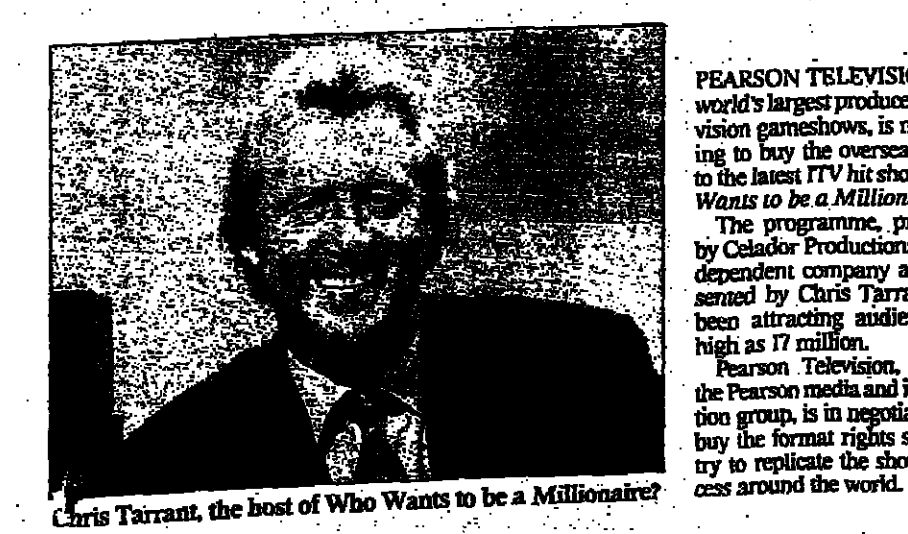
Mrs Cropper has reduced her stake from 8.8 per cent to 6.5 per cent. FI's 7,000 employees own 40 per cent of shares.

Headline earnings were 2.62p (1.66p) per share, and the interim dividend is 0.63p (0.43p).

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Pearson wants to be a millionaire

By Raymond Snoddy, media editor


Chris Tarrant, the host of Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

PEARSON TELEVISION, the world's largest producer of television gameshows, is negotiating to buy the overseas rights to the latest ITV hit show, *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*

The programme, produced by Celador Productions, an independent company and presented by Chris Tarrant, has been attracting audiences as high as 17 million.

Pearson Television, part of the Pearson media and information group, is in negotiations to buy the format rights so it can try to replicate the show's success around the world.

Pearson claims to make about 90 per cent of the leading gameshows in world television markets through the acquisition of companies such as Grundy and All American.

Yesterday, Pearson announced the purchase of a 10.9 per cent stake in E-Pub Holdings, a leading US online entertainment company.

Under the deal, the two companies will develop online versions of several of Pearson's gameshows, including *Family Feud*, *Match Game* and *Password*, on Uproar, E-Pub's gameshow website.

The stake in E-Pub Holdings would normally be worth £13 million but Pearson is paying only £800,000 because of the intellectual property the British company is bringing to the venture. If the first games are a success, Pearson will be able to increase its stake in E-Pub.

Greg Dyke, chairman and chief executive of Pearson Television, said: "E-Pub has the online gameshow expertise to bring our television properties to the growing Internet audience."

The initial deal between Pearson and E-Pub will run for two years.



Investors count cost as Brazil crisis hits FTSE

INVESTORS in the City were last night counting the cost of the worsening economic crisis in Brazil.

Share prices in New York, London and other European financial markets fell sharply in response to news of Brazil's currency devaluation.

At one stage, the FTSE 100 index tumbled almost 300 points, reflecting a loss of 260points for the Dow Jones industrial average in early trading on Wall Street.

In the event, the FTSE managed to reduce the loss to 183.5 at 5,850.1 by the close, while the FTSE 250 index shed 102.7 at 4,874.4.

Brokers said there was evidence of concerted selling as a total of 1.12 billion shares changed hands. The London market appeared braced for further falls.

In the futures pit, the March series closed just five points above the cash market, indicating a discount to true value.

Blue chips suffered the heaviest falls with the banks, pharmaceuticals and engineering companies particularly hard hit.

Among the casualties **Glaxo Wellcome** fell 59p to £21.33, **Granada Group** 45p to £11.00½, **Orange** 60½p to 873p, **Smiths Industries** 61p to 803½p, **Royal & SunAlliance** 39p to 483p, and **Zeneca** 71p to £26.73.

Tuesday's profits warning from **Allied Domecq**, 19p lower at 497p, had a knock-on effect in **Bass**, down 18½p at 786½p. Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, has taken the opportunity to reiterate its bearish stance on the shares.

It says the big four, Allied, Bass, **Whitbread**, 8p dearer at 775½p, and **Scottish & Newcastle**, 28½p off at 684½p, face the prospect of negative investment returns from the heavy spending programmes in their respective pub chains.

Boots was a nervous market, retreating 11½p to 998½p in heavy trading that saw more than two million shares change hands ahead of today's trading statement. Brokers are worried that the chemist had not enjoyed the spending spree at Christmas that had been hoped for.

Brokers remain clearly impressed with the growth of **Dixons'** free Internet service Freeserve with the price adding 44p to 958p. Like-for-like sales of the consumer electronics retailer, which is chaired by Sir Stanley Kalms, rose 3 per cent over the Christmas period. **WH Smith** also has its own book site on the Web which was behind its rise of 20½p to 537p.



Sir Stanley Kalms, right, and John Clare, the chief executive of Dixons, saw a 44p rise on the back of Freeserve's success

Meanwhile, City investors continued to clamour for Internet stocks which have not enjoyed the success in the UK commanded by their US counterparts. Even so, many traders take the view that they remain high-risk ventures. **On-Line**, where the directors were forced to unload 150,000 shares on Tuesday to improve liquidity, surged another 12p to 57½p. They started the week at 17p. Dan Wagner's **Dialog Corporation** was 1p firmer at 74½p.

Bid talk helped **Guardian Royal Exchange** to maintain its composure in a falling market with the price closing ½p dearer at 337½p. It follows a report in *The Times* indicating that the group is close to agreeing the terms of a bid from the French insurer Axa.

Allied Zurich came off 27p at 925½p as BT Alex Brown, the broker, urged clients to switch into rival **CGU**, 33p off at 890p.

Moving against the trend **Blagden Industries** firmed 1½p to 132½. Dealers say a bid could be on the way, having seen the shares plunge from a peak of 188½p since November.

What is going on at **Filtronic**, down 29p at 612½p? Professor John Rhodes, chairman, travelled down from Yorkshire to the Square Mile yesterday, where he was seen with one of his corporate advisers. The cellular and cable communications specialist has been linked with **Airtech**, all-square at 35½p, which earlier this week announced it had received a bid approach.

Luminar receded 10p to 665p after Mercury Asset Management reduced its holding in the night club operator from 48 per cent to 42.53 per cent.

There were some interesting trades going through on the ticker in **Aegis Group**, 1¾p firmer at 101p. This included several lines of 750,000 shares. John Amerman, a non executive director, has bought 10,429 shares at 91½p, taking his total holding to 21,358.

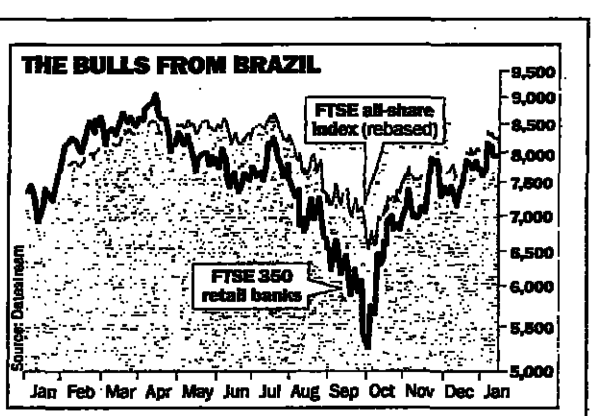
Talk of a bid fuelled a rise of 14p to 112½p in **T Clarke**. The construction group trades in an illiquid market where dealers are normally only prepared to make a price in 1,000 shares at a time.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** The growing Brazilian debt crisis may have undermined equities, but provided a further welcome fillip to the bond market.

Prices among longer-dated issues stretched to more than £2, at one stage, with the best gains seen in the eight to ten-year range. But the best levels were not always held.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt rose 78p to £119.51 as the total number of contracts completed reached 49,000. In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 touched £151.26 before finishing £1.35 dearer at £150.50, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 put on 16p at £107.91.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares were sharply down in late morning trade but were off their lows by midday. The Dow Jones industrial average was down 176.87 at 9,297.81.



BANKS Bore the brunt of yesterday's sell-off as the Brazilian debt crisis continued to bubble away.

The worst losses were seen in Standard Chartered, down 84p, or 10 per cent, at 742p, NatWest 105p to £10.66, HSBC 125p to £16.28, Barclays 77p to £13.22, Lloyds TSB 43p to 821½p and Royal Bank of Scotland 46p to £10.29½.

Investors are worried about the exposure of British banks to Brazil. They do not want a repeat of the bad debt crisis that sparked the financial troubles in the late 1980s. But the banks have learnt their lesson and have only minimal exposure to the world's eighth largest economy.

Crédit Lyonnais, the broker, says yesterday was a knee-jerk reaction, although NatWest and Standard Chartered were looking "top heavy".

They say this was just the catalyst that sparked the sell-off, but warn the banks will not be immune to bad debts and increased competition at home.

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	9297.81 (−176.87)
S&P Composite	1225.29 (−14.22)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	13403.60 (+42.63)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	10273.77 (−437.79)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index	507.29 (−26.95)

Sydney:

AO	2822.0 (−24.3)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4931.80 (−280.30)

Singapore:

Straits	1506.06 (−30.92)

Brussels:

BEL20	3415.15 (−81.68)

Paris:

CAC-40	3958.72 (+141.98)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1440.00 (−52.90)

London:

FT 30	3491.1 (−110.8)
FTSE 100	5850.1 (−183.5)
FTSE 250	4874.4 (−102.7)
FTSE 350	2761.1 (−82.2)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2706.83 (−116.17)
FTSE All-Share	2665.81 (−77.52)
FTSE Non Financials	2730.05 (−85.28)
FTSE Fixed Interest	157.27 (+0.82)
FTSE Govt Secs	115.98 (+0.81)
Bargains	88030
SEAQ Volume	1130.8m
US$	1.6522 (+0.0215)
Euro	0.7086 (+0.0008)
Exchange Index	99.0 (+0.4)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£ SDR	1.1715
RPI	164.4 Nov (3.0%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	162.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1987=100

AIM VCT	100		...
Abbey Natl Dublin Inv	93	+	½
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	96	−	3
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	121½		...
Charriol	117½		...
Collective Assets Trust	117		...
Financial Objects	270	−	6
First Active	319	−	26½
Five Arrs Uts Cv Ln 2040	112¼	−	7
Marley B	11		...
Natl Bldg Mtls Cv Pf	105		...
Natural Building Mtls	5		...
Piccadilly Growth Ts	97		...
REXAM B (100)	96		...
Singer & Frd AIM VCT	108		...
Willington	77½		...
Xenova Warrants	16½	+	1½
Yeoman II Equity Units	97		...
Yeoman II Inv Tst Cap	5½	−	½
Yeoman II Inv Tst Inc	92½	+	1
Yeoman II Zero Div Pf	112½	+	¼

EMAP n/p (875)	200	−	15
Recognition Systems n/p (9)	3½	−	2
SKD Media n/p (15)	½	−	¾

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Clarke T	112½	+ 14	+ 14.2
Nord Anglia	142½	+ 14	+ 10.8
Hall Eng	107	+ 9½	+ 9.7
Norbain	233½	+ 20	+ 9.3
Sears	310½	+ 25	+ 8.7
Ramco Egy	260	+ 20	+ 8.3
Thorntons	226	+ 15	+ 7.1

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Morgan Cble	183½	− 79	− 30.0
Yorkyde	56½	− 20½	− 26.6
Abbot Group	141½	− 24½	− 14.7
Allied Carpets	35	− 6	− 14.6
Pegasus	262½	− 37½	− 12.5
Eure Telecom	146½	− 19½	− 11.7
Courtaulds Text	136	− 17½	− 11.4
Stand Chart	742	− 84	− 10.1
Framl Dual Cp	146	− 16½	− 10.1
Bodycote	702½	− 72½	− 9.3
Hse of Fraser	53½	− 5½	− 9.3
Jarvis	599½	− 60½	− 9.1
Nat West	1066	−105	− 8.9
Cookson	122½	− 12	− 8.9
Computerland UK	190	− 18½	− 8.8
Smurfit (Jeff)	116	− 11	− 8.6

Morgan cast down

THE profit warning from Morgan Crucible is certainly dire news for shareholders. At 183½p the shares now trade at barely a third of the 500p they were worth last May.

But the significance of the bad news should not be lost on those who invest more widely. Here is a company with an excellent reputation. Its profits and dividends have grown steadily for the past five years. The management is thoughtful and experienced. Its geographical, product and customer mix is wide, giving it relatively little exposure to problems that could knock sales to one or two segments. It has number one market positions in 50 per cent of its business.

Yes, Crucible is an engineer and these sorts of company have struggled to find favour. Sentiment for Morgan is not helped by the fact that its has failed to find buyers for the non-core businesses that it put the for sale sign over last September. But if this normally reliable, mainstream global business can deliver such a nasty surprise, it means that precious *few* companies can be said to be immune from the economic and industrial uncertainties that are swirling.

Down 79p or 30 per cent yesterday the shares are changing hands for the equivalent of only eight times expected earnings per share for 1998. Dividend cover is likely to come in at about 1.5 times and while a cut in the payment is unlikely — unless things get a lot worse — the final looks as if it will be held, giving a gross yield of 11 per cent.

The ratios give the impression that Morgan is worse off than it really is and the shares are worth holding in the hope of a bounce. But it is grim out there.

Whitbread

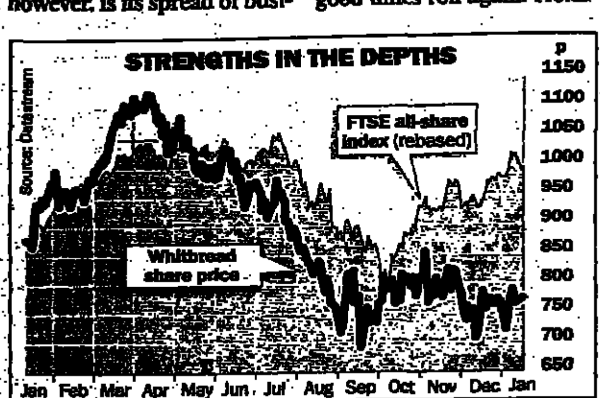
IN THE wake of its shock profit warning on Tuesday, Allied Domecq suggested that the poor trading in its pubs was an industry-wide problem. Yesterday's update from Whitbread, however, undermines Allied's defence.

It is becoming clear that Allied is faring rather worse than some of its more nimble-footed competitors. To compound its crime, Allied failed to get its downbeat message across to investors. It is probably no coincidence that the true picture, in all its gory detail, came out the very day before Philip Bowman officially took the reins as finance director. There is nothing like wiping the slate clean as you start a new job.

That is not to say that Whitbread has emerged unscathed. For much of the past year the shares have felt the backwash from weaker consumer spending. In the more recent festive period comparable sales in its food-led pubs and restaurants were down by about 3 per cent, although sales of drinks were down just 1 per cent against industry declines of about 2 per cent.

Whitbread's saving grace, however, is its spread of businesses *and the strength of its* brands. The likes of Marriott, Travel Inn, Costa and David Lloyd Leisure continue to prosper, and investment is increasingly being targeted at these faster growth areas.

The economic climate will probably get worse before it gets better but Whitbread looks well placed for when the good times roll again. Hold.



FI Group

IT IS not the most encouraging signal when the directors of a company sell. With uncomfortable frequency disposals of this sort have, with hindsight, proved to be ill-starred portents.

But director sales are not often accompanied by a 75 per cent rise in half-year profits. FI Group, the company in question here, is forecast to repeat the trick for the full-year.

Moreover, the profits growth is not about to disappear. FI generates 45 per cent of its earnings from long-term contracts *that will deliver in*come almost guaranteed for the next four years. As a computer software and personnel supplier, it is also in an industry with plenty of opportunity.

So why the frantic selling? If directors believe their company is hopelessly overvalued they would be hard to contradict. FI shares trade at a staggering 64.6 times forecast earnings. FI is a good company for sure, but is it really that good?

Like so many IT stocks, FI is supported by the "bigger fool" theory. This sees current purchasers admitting the foolishness of buying, but ever-confident that they will find bigger fools further down the line.

FI directors, it seems, are worried how many bigger fools there are. Follow their lead and take profits.

Wembley

MANY think Wembley is a stadium. Some think its is a public company. *What it really is*, though, is an enigma.

After all, the company has been trying to agree a deal to sell the stadium since April. Yet, yesterday, when it did announce the deal, a move that should lead to a £100 million cash handout, the shares fell 22p to 351½p.

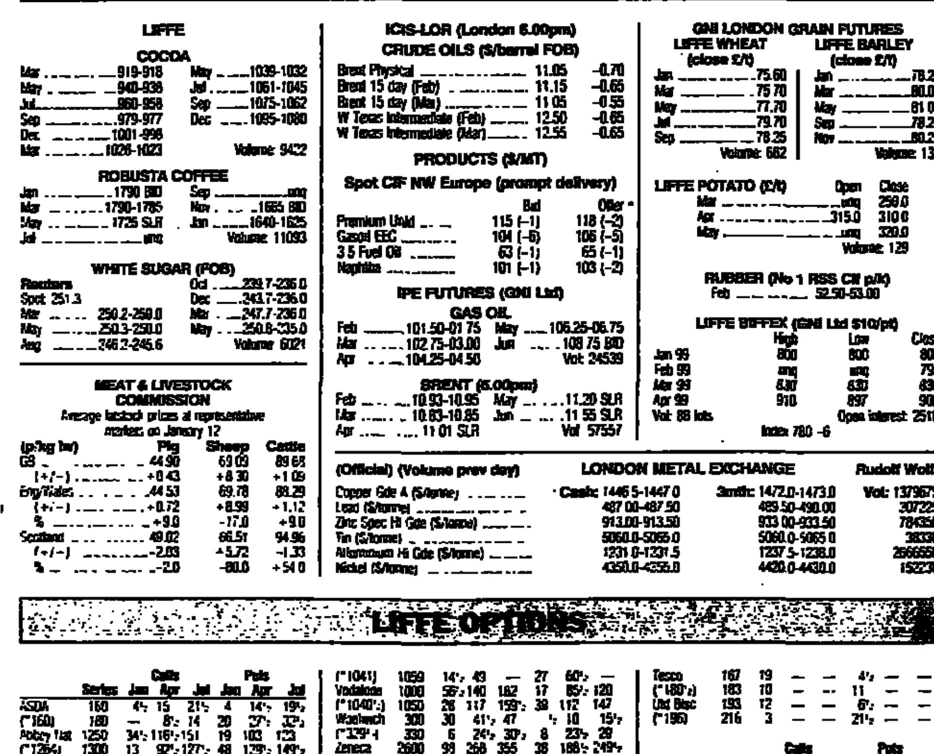
There are two possible explanations. Perhaps the market agrees with the three non-executive directors, who have opposed the stadium deal, and think that the sale of the ground to the Football Association for £103 million is not commercially sensible.

Or maybe the shares have fallen because the FA deal is likely to deter Enic, the football investment company, which is proposing to make a 418½p a share bid (200p of which would be in cash). An Enic bid is now less likely, but it has not yet ruled itself out of the game.

Enic has about six weeks in which to decide what to do. It could still bid and scupper *the deal, or bid and strike a* deal with the FA to help fund the £200 million cost of rebuilding the stadium.

Given that shareholders are guaranteed a cash handout of at least 180p a share if the stadium is sold to the FA, it is hard to see less than 400p of value in Wembley one way or another. Hang on.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE



COMMODITIES

LIFFE COCOA

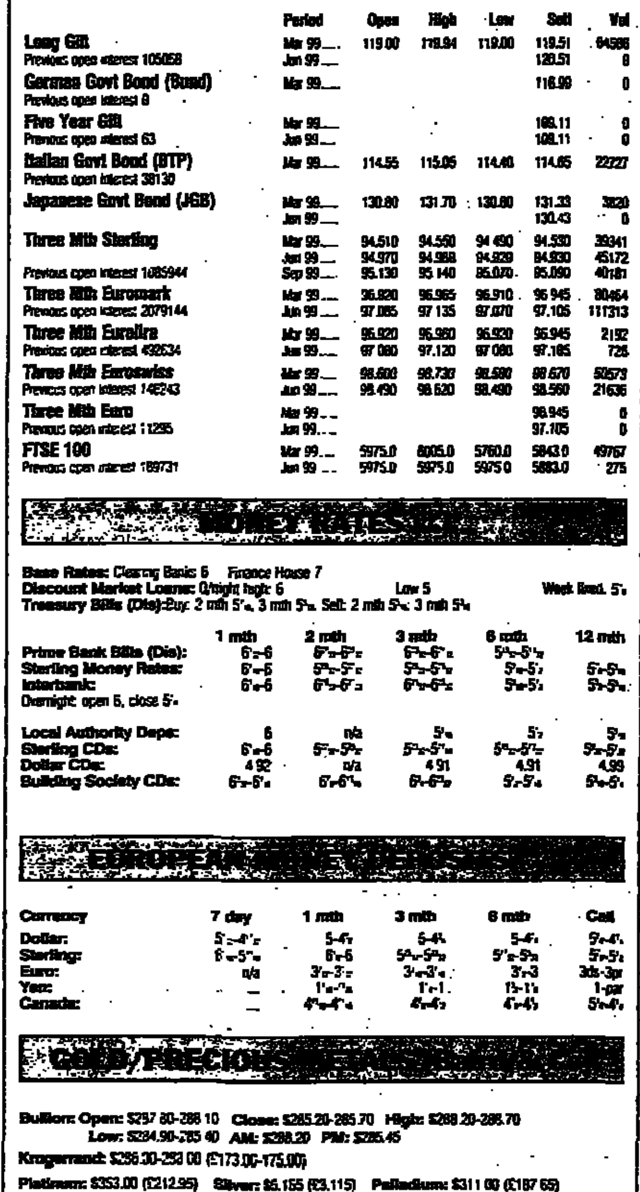
Mar	919-918	May	1039-1032
Mar	940-938	Jul	1061-1045
Jul	960-958	Sep	1075-1062
Sep	979-977	Dec	1095-1080
Dec	1001-998		
Mar	1028-1023	Volume:	9432

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	11.05	−0.70
Brent 15 day (Feb)	11.15	−0.65
Brent 15 day (Mar)	11.05	−0.55
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	12.50	−0.65
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	12.55	−0.65

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	75.60	Jan	78.25
Mar	75.70	Mar	80.00
May	77.70	May	81.00
Jul	79.70	Sep	78.25
Sep	78.25	Nov	80.25
Volume: 662		Volume: 132	



LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 99	119.00	119.94	119.00	119.51	64586
Previous open interest 105058	Jun 99				120.51	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				116.99	0
Previous open interest 8						
Five Year Gilt	Mar 99				108.11	0
Previous open interest 63	Jun 99				108.11	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	114.55	115.05	114.40	114.65	22727
Previous open interest 38130						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	130.80	131.70	130.80	131.33	3820
	Jun 99				130.43	0
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.510	94.550	94.490	94.530	39341
	Jun 99	94.970	94.988	94.920	94.930	45172
Previous open interest 1085944	Sep 99	95.130	95.140	95.070	95.090	40181
Three Mth Euromark	Mar 99	96.920	96.965	96.910	96.945	80464
Previous open interest 2079144	Jun 99	97.085	97.135	97.070	97.105	111313
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 99	96.920	96.960	96.920	96.945	2192
Previous open interest 432534	Jun 99	97.080	97.120	97.080	97.105	726
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.600	98.730	98.590	98.670	50573
Previous open interest 146243	Jun 99	98.490	98.620	98.490	98.560	21636
Three Mth Euro	Mar 99				96.945	0
Previous open interest 11295	Jun 99				97.105	0
FTSE 100	Mar 99	5975.0	6005.0	5760.0	5843.0	49767
Previous open interest 189731	Jun 99	5975.0	5975.0	5975.0	5883.0	275

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance House 7
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6 Low 5 Week fixed: 5⅞
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5[illegible]; 3 mth 5[illegible]; Sell: 2 mth 5[illegible]; 3 mth 5[illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 6, close 5[illegible]					
Local Authority Deps:	6	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.92	n/a	4.91	4.91	4.99
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3ds-3pr
Yen:	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

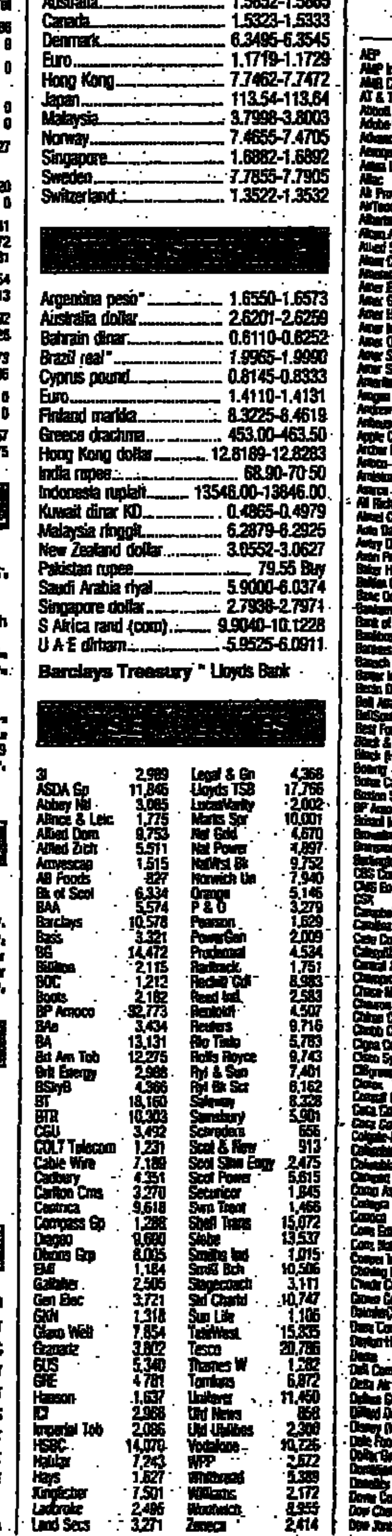
GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS

Platinum: $353.00 (£212.95) Silver: $5.155 (£3.115) Palladium: $311.00 (£187.65)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for January 13	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.487-10.520	10.502-10.515	¼-⅛pr	⅝-⅜pr
Euro	1.4111-1.4131	1.4114-1.4127	0.16-0.19ds	0.43-0.47ds
Montreal	2.4882-2.5375	2.5236-2.5268	0.27-0.19pr	0.56-0.42pr
New York	1.6395-1.6550	1.6521-1.6531	0.160-0.140pr	0.325-0.295pr
Oslo	12.203-12.357	12.324-12.340	⅛-¾ds	⅓-⅛ds
Stockholm	12.721-12.896	12.875-12.896	¾-¼pr	¼ds-¼pr
Tokyo	182.86-188.22	187.71-187.94	1-⅞pr	2½-2¼pr
Zurich	2.2389-2.2570	2.2389-2.2419	1-⅞pr	2½-2¼pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds



DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5852-1.5865
Canada	1.5323-1.5333
Denmark	6.3495-6.3545
Euro	1.1719-1.1729
Hong Kong	7.7462-7.7472
Japan	113.54-113.64
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8003
Norway	7.4655-7.4705
Singapore	1.6882-1.6892
Sweden	7.7855-7.7905
Switzerland	1.3522-1.3532

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6550-1.6573
Australia dollar	2.6201-2.6259
Bahrain dinar	0.6110-0.6252
Brazil real*	1.9965-1.9990
Cyprus pound	0.8145-0.8333
Euro	1.4110-1.4131
Finland markka	8.3225-8.4619
Greece drachma	453.00-463.50
Hong Kong dollar	12.8189-12.8283
India rupee	68.90-70.50
Indonesia rupiah	13546.00-13846.00
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4865-0.4979
Malaysia ringgit	6.2879-6.2925
New Zealand dollar	3.0552-3.0627
Pakistan rupee	79.55 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9000-6.0374
Singapore dollar	2.7938-2.7971
S Africa rand (com)	9.9040-10.1228
U A E dirham	5.9525-6.0911

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank



Trade is weak link in global stability

Western financial markets declared it was business as usual in October. Half the world might be diving into uncontrolled recession, but the hedge funds had been saved. The dual motors of the Nafta countries and euroland, which together account for well over half measured world output, were still growing at a respectable pace. Together, they could keep the world economy show on the road.

West of the Vistula and North of the tropics, asset prices have been booming. Even in Britain, there are still plenty of jobs of a sort.

In East Asia, epicentre of gloom, avuncular emissaries from the IMF, the World Bank *et al* have offered positive thinking. A meeting of central bank governors in Hong Kong this week brought reassurance that the worst is past and things are getting better.

No matter, perhaps, that most citizens in stricken parts would give the standard pantomime reply: "Oh no they're not". The fall in Malaysian industrial output appears to be accelerating but at least the Indonesian rupiah has recovered to 30 per cent of its 1997 value, up from 14 per cent last summer. More of a dead cat bounce than the West's bungee boom.

Only on Tuesday, the US Treasury Secretary used a visit from the President of Argentina to offer the "total support of the global community" for policy in Brazil, the teetering domino that was propped up at the end of the last wave of financial panic. This time, it was too late. So we are back to damage limitation, entreating China not to help its economy by devaluing too.

However confidence-sapping, Brazil's devaluation was predicted and widely recommended. It underlines how fragile the world economy still is. If Asia, Eastern Europe and South America are to keep their economic heads above water, they must rely on American consumers continuing to spend not just all their income but a good slice of their capital-gains as well. So Tuesday's threats of US trade sanctions were more ominous than the rumblings in Rio.

In Tokyo, Charlene Barshefsky, US Trade Representative, threatened Japan with "punitive sanctions" unless it quickly reversed a rise in steel exports to the US. Steel was just one facet of rapidly worsening trade relations.

In Geneva, US trade ambassador Rita Hayes pressed ahead with threats to levy punitive 100 per cent tariffs on about $500 million worth of EU exports to America over the tangled banana dispute. America backs the heirs of United Fruit, inventor of the banana republic. The bizarre list of imports targeted, from cashmere sweaters to gilt chandeliers, no doubt answered lobby pleas.

Such disputes will multiply.



America is heading towards a $300 billion trade deficit this year. Euroland and Japan should run up a combined $200 billion surplus. Many US businesses will be hit by imports in the run-up to the 2000 presidential election campaign, ensuring that protection, or "fair trade" is high on the agenda.

Both the US and the EU have lectured Asia, including Japan, to rely on internal demand rather than export-led recovery. If anyone took the advice seriously, they would be condemning the region to a decade of depression.

America can still claim to be the champion of free trade, even if vulnerable sectors are rigidly protected A key task of US Trade Representatives is therefore to shout imprecations against US trade partners through a media megaphone to calm populist calls to save American jobs from the foreigner.

In continental Europe, protectionism is more intellectually respectable. Adherence to free trade is often only pragmatic. As soon as the stricken countries exploit recovery in the euroland economy to boost their exports, they can expect even more hysterical cries of foul.

As British Steel knows only too well, trade in steel is more vulnerable to exchange rates than trade in branded goods. Although Japan was supposedly flooding the US with steel last year, its steel output fell by 11 per cent, more than any other top producer. Ironically, Japan ceded second spot to America, where output dipped 1 per cent.

Russian output fell 10 per cent and Korea's by 8 per cent. By contrast, Brazil nearly maintained steel production and China, now the world leader, expanded by 6 per cent. Clearly, Brazil's devaluation will increase pressure on the US steel industry. Any devaluation by China would wreak havoc all over the shop.

As stress increases on American and European industries, the danger of a retreat from free trade will grow. It is already worse than at any time since the days of the overstrong Reagan dollar. Over the next couple of years we shall surely see the open trading system come under greater strain than at any time since the protectionism that did so much harm in the 1930s was banished 50 years ago.

A trade war is most likely to happen by accident. US megaphone trade diplomacy is routine, aimed randomly at South Korea, Russia, India, Pakistan, Japan or Britain, which has been singled out for exemplary punishment in that other Gulf conflict over bananas. Smaller partners will no doubt surrender to the superpower's trade gunboat. But lurid threats do tend to spark real war, especially if the threat has to be backed up with action, as in 1914.

How easy it would then be, for instance, for the EU to raise the stakes in retaliation: how emotionally difficult not to. We should try to resist temptation. A trade war would finally plunge the global economy into depression, even if some would prosper for a while.

America should be reminded, yet again, that what is said for consumption at home can have disastrous consequences abroad.

BTR investors aim to engineer a better deal from the chaos

Paul Durman reports from the disarray of an extraordinary shareholder meeting

It is just as well that BTR did not choose to hold its extraordinary general meeting in the Brewery, a popular venue in the City. That might have provoked an all-too-obvious jibe about its organisational skills.

Yesterday's gathering of BTR shareholders, which essentially marked the death knell for what was once Britain's seventh-largest company, descended into procedural chaos as private investors attempted to block the "disgraceful" merger with Siebe that they have been offered.

Bob Bauman, the engineering group's American chairman, was forced to reverse his initial ruling that an attempt to adjourn the meeting was out of order. This followed a hurried consultation, lasting several minutes, between David Stevens, BTR's general counsel and secretary, and lawyers from Slaughter & May. Mr Stevens had earlier been unable to provide his chairman with a breakdown of the proxy votes he was holding. He must have had an interesting conversation with Mr Bauman yesterday afternoon.

There then followed another delay while the company tried to find poll cards for the adjournment debate. Shareholders milled around, offering encouragement to Eddie Northcote, the retired managment accountant who proposed the adjournment, and muttering about the ensuing shambles.

Like the vote on the £8.5 billion merger with Siebe, the poll on the adjournment was a foregone conclusion because Mr Bauman was holding proxies equivalent to 98.9 per cent of the 58 per cent of shares voted. This, too, was a bone of contention — how could he use votes cast in support of the merger to back another, entirely different proposal? The meeting did not stagger to a close until almost four and a half hours after it began.

This final chapter was somehow in keeping with BTR's decline since the retirement in 1993 of Sir Owen Green, its driving force through three decades. The sprawling conglomerate with an obsession about improving profit margins has found it difficult to learn new tricks in an era of low inflation.

Ian Strachan arrived as chief executive in April 1995 and tried to create a culture based on sales growth. He made billions of pounds of disposals to turn BTR into an allegedly focused engineering group. But neither this, nor the arrival of the well-regarded Mr Bauman, could bring an end to a succession of profit warnings and disappointing trading statements.

Long-term shareholders in BTR — and many attended yesterday's meeting — had seen its share price slide from 400p to 95p in less than five years. They traded above 220p as recently as last May.

Yet Mr Bauman and his board struck their escape deal with Siebe on terms that value BTR's shares at a 14-year low. From Phillips & Drew downwards, few shareholders have much enthusiasm for the proposals to create a control systems colossus with Siebe — not least because Siebe has its own problems, losing the premium rating that it enjoyed until last May. In the circumstances, BTR's board must have expected a rough ride. Mr Northcote had already, on Monday, unsuccessfully asked the High Court to force the adjournment of the meeting. The BTR shareholders who turned up were uniformly hostile to a deal that gives them only 45 per cent of the enlarged BTR Siebe, despite contributing about two thirds of the assets.

One small investor was greeted with applause when he said: "A board who recommended this deal should be sacked — and especially the non-executive directors whose job it is to sse that shareholder value is maintained."

A Mr Bowler queried how BTR could accept a valuation based on a share price trading at a ten-year low. Surely some bidder could have been found that would offer 140p, perhaps 160p, a share. "We've been skinned," he said.

Kenneth Riley, another small investor, was allowed time to expound a long analysis of the relative values of BTR and Siebe based on sales, assets, gearing and other criteria. His conclusion was that BTR should be worth 2.3 times Siebe. "This is the directors acting against the interests of the shareholders," said Mr Riley.

Mr Bauman insisted that the board did consider other options to revive BTR. He said: "We have examined all the alternatives. We determined that a merger was the best course for the company.

"If anybody felt that they wanted to buy the company then it certainly has been possible for somebody to come through and do it. We think this is the best offer — and it's the only offer on the table." This, of course, has been the reluctant conclusion of the company's institutional shareholders.

Shareholders were also upset that they will miss out on a further £500 million that BTR was planning to hand back to them. And they complained about the £18 million of fees being paid to Goldman Sachs and Schroders, BTR's investment banking advisers.

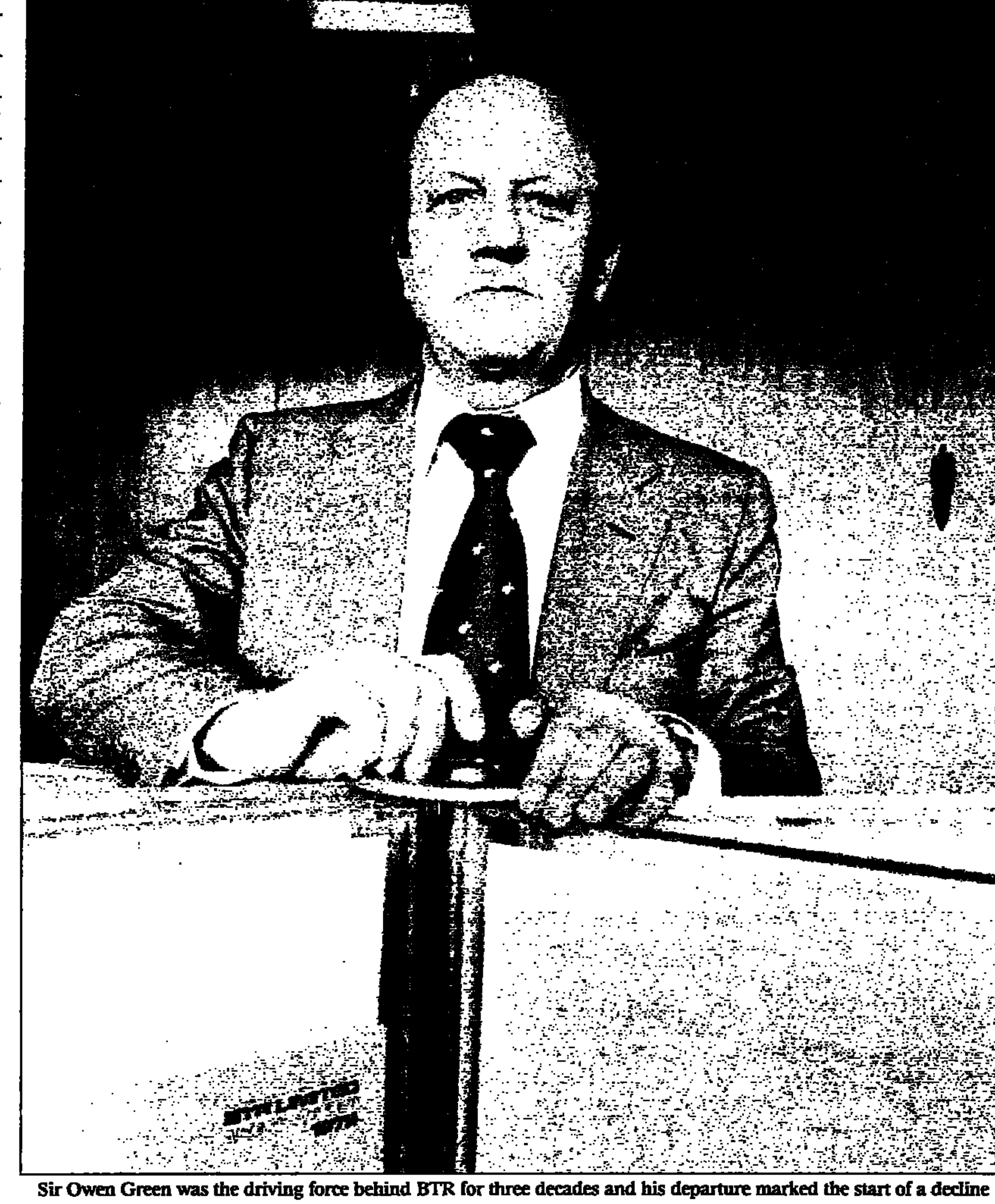
Much of the venom was directed against the hapless Mr Strachan — though hapless is perhaps not the right word to describe a man who stands to collect more than £1.5 million in compensation if, as expected, he leaves BTR Siebe after overseeing the start of the integration.

One shareholder said the proposed level of compensation was "a ridiculous amount of money", adding: "The only reason for this merger is to remove him from his high office." Mr Stachan was told that "in all honour" he should cut down the amount of money he takes when he leaves. Mr Bauman defended Mr Strachan's deal-making but pointedly added that as deputy chairman of BTR Siebe "he's not in line command of operations."

Mr Northcote and other diehards have not yet given up hope. He said that he and "dozens" of other investors intend to petition the High Court on February 1 to persuade a judge to block the Siebe deal at the final hurdle.

Mr Northcote insists that the merger documents are misleading because Siebe's figures include £300 million of intangible assets — a value that would not be recognised under BTR's accounting conventions. He said this makes the merger an even worse deal for BTR's shareholders.

It looks a futile effort, but Mr Northcote has some "previous" in this area. In 1992 he successfully prevented Alan Sugar from taking Amstrad private at a knockdown price.



Sir Owen Green was the driving force behind BTR for three decades and his departure marked the start of a decline

Free Internet service proves to be not such a giveaway

Many consumers were left open-mouthed last year when Dixons, the electrical retail chain, decided to offer unlimited access to the Internet — which usually costs between £10 to £16 a month from a company such as AOL or Demon — for free.

Yet the service, which Dixons yesterday said had attracted 900,000 accounts, is no giveaway. In some ways, it is a demonstration of how companies — with a little bit of lateral thinking — can use the Internet to their advantage. Yet it is also a demonstration of how a company can irritate its customers by promising much, and then delivering a rather disappointing service.

The strategy behind Freeserve is extremely clever. In most cases, you have to walk into a shop — either Dixons, Curry's, PC World or The Link — to get hold of the CD-Rom needed to boot up the service, creating valuable "footfall" for the company. Once inside a store, it is likely many customers (being tech-heads anyway for wanting to get on the Internet) will splash out a couple of hundred quid for a new gizmo.

The second catch comes when you load up the CD-Rom. After about half an hour of fiddling and switching on and off your computer, you find the left hand side of your Windows screen plastered with gaudy adverts for the Internet sites of organisations such as the *Financial Times* and the BBC. Apparently this is all part of Microsoft's latest version of Internet Explorer (the product that partly inspired the epic anti-trust trial against the software group in the US), and is there to make it easier for Internet users to visit their "favourite" sites.

Dixons, quite fairly, argues that it has nothing to do with this software, and would not be allowed to change it even if it wanted to. It is also possible, Dixons says, to get rid of the various plugs with a little bit of tweaking. It looks, however, a lot like a clever way of putting advertising directly onto your desktop, even if this is a Microsoft, rather than Dixons, ploy. This gets around the enormous problem facing advertisers of trying to reach a mass-market on the Internet, where there are literally trillions of sites.

The third catch comes when you try to log on to Freeserve. Before you are allowed to do anything you have to fill in a detailed form telling Dixons nearly every personal detail about yourself, from your salary and your personal interests to where you live. If you are willing to give that information away, you can then use the Freeserve service.



However, when I tried using it at home, it was painfully slow, and the modem occasionally lost its connection to the Freeserve server. All in all, I began to realise why I had been paying a tenner a month for a normal Internet service. Dixons, however, claims that this is exceptional, and that recent tests have shown it to be one of the faster services available in Britain. "The Internet often has very slow days," says a Freeserve official. "You have to be careful who you ascribe that to."

Time will ultimately tell whether Freeserve's customers think it gives a good service, although many are likely to keep their account while using a paid-for service at the same time. The aim of Dixons is to sell advertising on Freeserve, and integrate shopping sites into the service, so they can take a fee every time a transaction takes place.

So far, Dixons appears to be the only British retailer to have demonstrated such an understanding of how it can use the Internet to its advantage. Yet many users will be left with the impression that Freeserve needs to improve the quality of its service, and be a bit more upfront with consumers about what they are giving to Dixons, and what they are getting for free.

☐ IBM, the computer group, won the most patents in the US for the sixth consecutive year in 1998, beating its previous record by a massive 40 per cent, according to a survey out this week.

☐ INVESTORS facing large tax bills are being urged to put money into a new British film, *Paradise Grove*, starring Warren Mitchell, who become famous playing Alf Garnett in *Till Death Us Do Part*. The producers say they will publish a fundraising prospectus next week that takes advantage of tax concessions.

CHRIS AYRES

Junk e-mail

THERE is an e-mail doing the rounds of the City concerning the Walt Disney Company and a new product called Beta E-mail Tracking developed by Disney and Microsoft. The message explains that as part of the tests for the system, 13,000 people must receive it, so pass it on to 15 other peopel.

There is a prize, cash and/or trips to Disneyland, offered at the end of the process. The e-mail has, in just a couple of days, made the rounds of Barclays Capital, Cazenove and any number of other firms. You will be seeing it soon.

Amazing how credulous people can be. It is a complete fake, of course. "I've been asked to tell anyone who phones about it that it's not from us," says a lady in corporate affairs.

Who would think up such a pointless spoof? "It's designed to clog up the e-mail system," says someone who knows about these things.



"This country should have a recession more often"

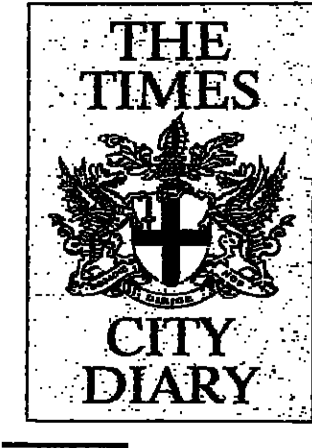
A TRIO of QCs are conducting a seminar on February 1 titled "Capital Tax Planning after Lady Ingram". This was the recent landmark case having to do with inheritance tax and how to avoid this after your death. The seminar, appropriately if coincidentally, is at the Royal College of Pathologists.

French leave

AS I predicted last week, Jean Lemierre, a French Treasury civil servant, has been enthroned as chairman of the powerful Economic and Finance Committee, successor to the Monetary Committee, which was chaired by our own Treasury man, Sir Nigel Wicks.

His departure has led to an unusual and fulsome tribute in the French press. *La Tribune* told its readers that he had gone because of Britain's non-involvement in the euro. So the Englishman had done the decent thing, much about the British sense of fair play, etc. etc. and stood aside.

Heart-warming, but not, alas, true. Wicks had to stand down because a) the Monetary Committee has ceased to exist and b) he is due to retire in 18 months, and the term is for two years. Still, it gave the French the chance to be nice about us for a change.



I HEAR the normally hardheaded computer firm EDS is considering giving a large sum to charity in Kingston upon Thames to compensate those who received housing benefit late after EDS took over some services for the local council. In fact, says the excellent industry paper, Computer Weekly, *a five-figure sum has been agreed. EDS admits to problems with the revenue and benefits services last year and is indeed considering such a "gesture", says a spokesman. He seems thoroughly annoyed that the news has come out.*

I get the impression his petulance might be because the company would like to have announced the kind "donation" itself. With the proper spin, of course.

Net growth

STANDING room only at the Dixons analysts meeting yesterday, with more than a hundred on hand. A number of the analysts were strangely unfamiliar to the company.

The reason became obvious when the questions started. They were part of the strange tribe who cover only Internet stocks, because Dixons, as you will read elsewhere, is Britain's premier Internet stock.

Retail-watchers wanting to know about gross margins were swamped by techies asking about "third generation appliances". Everyone eventually decided that Dixons was a raging buy, though they were a bit hazy on precisely why.

BARELY days into the job, and the new Minister for Small Businesses is firmly on-message. Michael Wills appeared at his first public engagement yesterday, at the Institute of Directors.

His subject, unpromisingly, was information technology and how companies can be made or encouraged to comply to beat the dreaded bug. Which he managed to transform into a sermon on the Third Way: there are three ways, he said, the first compulsion, the second chaos, and the third partnership. The boy will go far.

Milken names

THE Milken Institute, chairman Michael Milken of junk bonds fame, is inviting registrations for a March conference on the global economy. The cast list includes five economics Nobel Prize winners.

It does not include Albert Gore, US Vice-President, Helmut Kohl, Robert Rubin, the Treasury Secretary, and two other senior US politicians. Nor even the ever-popular Mikhail Gorbachev. They are "invited but not confirmed".

I cannot speak for their availability, though I wonder about Gorbachev, who doesn't get out much. But I notice there was no invite for Clinton. Perhaps they don't think he'll be around by then.

MARTIN WALLER

martin.waller@the-times.co.uk



Milken: host of illustrious names not yet signed up for conference



LIG sells product rights

London International Group (LIG), the makers of condoms and other healthcare products, has agreed to sell the product rights and operating assets of a range of its non-core health and beauty products, sold largely under the Ico brand name in Southern Europe, to Novico for about £4.3 million in cash.

The company said the disposal would allow it to focus on its Durex condom brand in Italy and Spain. LIG will retain the Sauber and Mister Baby health and beauty brands.

The disposal is anticipated to be earnings-neutral in 1999-2000 and positive thereafter.

Tullow lifts stake

Tullow Oil, the exploration group based in the Republic of Ireland, has entered into an arrangement with Perenco Investments and Edinburgh Oil & Gas that will result in Tullow increasing its interest in the North Yorkshire gasfields from 13 per cent to 60 per cent. The deal, subject to approval by the Department of Trade and Industry, will see Tullow assume responsibility for the operation of the Knapton power station. Tullow will pay $7.3 million (£4.5 million) and Edinburgh, which lifts its stake to 40 per cent, $2.7 million.

Vega confident

Vega Group, the IT services company, said that an excellent order intake had boosted its results and strong demand meant that it was looking for a significant improvement in full-year profits. For the six months to October 31, pre-tax profit was up 71 per cent at £1.43 million on turnover 24 per cent higher at £12.9 million. Earnings per share were 6.10p (3.29p) and the interim dividend is 2.13p (1.91p). The company said that at the end of October its forward order book was £30 million.

Henry N. Lewis

Henry N. Lewis, chairman of Action Computer Supplies, has not sold £202,000 of Electronics Boutique shares as reported on Tuesday. The transaction was carried out by a separate Henry N. Lewis, a non-executive director of Electronics Boutique unrelated to the ACS chairman.

OFT orders banks to step up efforts to cater for the poor

By Gavin Lumsden

JOHN BRIDGEMAN, Director-General of Fair Trading, yesterday warned banks and building societies that they could face regulation by the Financial Services Authority if they do not increase their efforts to serve the poorest in society.

Presenting the Office of Fair Trading's report, *Vulnerable Consumers and Financial Services*, Mr Bridgeman said that one in ten households did not have a current account, effectively depriving them of access to basic financial services.

Research by the OFT suggests just under a quarter of people who applied for a current account in the past year had been rejected by banks after failing their credit checks. Such people were unable to arrange home insurance and incurred higher gas and electricity bills through having to use pre-payment meters.

Barred from gaining credit from conventional sources, consumers without current accounts were far more likely to fall into the hands of loan sharks. Saving was almost impossible, the report said. Mr Bridgeman urged banks, retailers and the Post Office to take advantage of new technology and offer the poor access to basic, low-cost current accounts that would not let them go overdrawn.

Mr Bridgeman dismissed the notion that people chose not to take up basic financial services. Rather, he said, the current business and regulatory system was excluding them. "People are being left behind in an expanding market where the choice is between a range of complex and highly regulated products primarily aimed at relatively well-off and low-risk consumers." Credit unions and a new generation of cheap flexible products should be developed. Individual savings accounts — which replace Peps and Tessas in April — were not the final answer.

Insisting that poor customers represented an untapped business opportunity for the financial services industry, Mr Bridgeman issued his warning: "It is not inconceivable that if we don't see a social response from financial insitutions then a regulatory response might be needed."

Roger Miles, of the British Bankers' Association, said that its research showed that only 5 per cent of the population was excluded from the clearance system. Banks were already offering the accounts that the OFT had recommended. "These are very good ideas — so good we are already doing them," he said.

A spokesman for the Treasury, which is preparing to publish its own report on financial services and social exclusion in July, said it welcomed the OFT's proposals and would examine them.

Morgan Crucible issues warning

By Adam Jones

SHARES of Morgan Crucible, the engineer, plummeted yesterday after it gave warning of a "swift and savage" downturn in its markets.

The group, which makes carbon and ceramic parts used by industry, said 1998 profits before tax would be 15 to 20 per cent lower than in 1997, when it made £108.3 million. The shares had fallen from 262½p to 183p by early afternoon.

The main reason for the profits shortfall is the flood of cheap steel imports into the US from Japan, South Korea and South America. The pressure this put on US steel producers meant they delayed refurbishment programmes that would have required Morgan Crucible products.

Shares of Cookson were also marked down after Morgan highlighted the US steel problem, which Cookson also supplies. Its shares fell from 134½p to 122½p.

Morgan was also affected by over-ordering at Boeing, the US aircraft maker. Morgan supplies $20,000 (£12,000) of parts on every 747. There was also destocking and deferment of orders in the semiconductor industry. Demand after the strike at General Motors in the US was slow and the electrical carbon division was also hit by a site reorganisation.

Tempus, page 28

On the ball: Karren Brady said the club's plan to offer financial services was a 'natural step'

Blues to offer mortgages

BIRMINGHAM CITY, the AIM-listed football club known by its fans as the Blues, plans to launch a financial services arm that will offer supporters a wide range of products, including individual savings accounts and mortgages (Manus Costello writes).

Karren Brady, the club's managing director, said: "It is a natural step. Supporters trust their club and trust is important if you are borrowing or investing money." She declined to reveal the partner with whom the joint venture will be undertaken, but said it was "one of the country's leading financial services company".

Birmingham's drive for promotion led to the signing of a number of players, which hit the annual results, announced yesterday. The net cost of transfer fees was £5.2 million, causing the club to post a pre-tax loss of £3.7 million for the year to August 31, down from last year's £1.1 million profit. The loss per share was 7.23p, against earnings of 2.52p, and again no dividend was offered.

Dutch bid £80m for Dudley Jenkins

By Matthew Barbour

WEGENER, the Dutch publisher and printer, yesterday emerged as the mystery suitor for Dudley Jenkins, the direct mail supplies group. Dudley Jenkins has agreed to a cash offer from the Dutch company of 580p per share, valuing the company at £80.6 million.

The offer represents a premium of about 18 per cent to the closing price of 492½p on January 11, the day before the company announced it was in possible takeover talks. Wegener has received undertakings from shareholders who speak for 54 per cent of Dudley Jenkins shares to accept the offer.

Wegener's direct marketing division has a yearly turnover of about £100 million and a market capital of £370 million. Dudley Jenkins has a yearly turnover of about £26 million.

Tylan Bahcheli, chairman at Dudley Jenkins, said the move would give it access to new European markets.

Wegener, whose operations include regional newspapers, radio and television, said the acquisition fits with its aim of building its position in the European direct marketing sector.

Yesterday Dudley Jenkins posted first-half pre-tax profits up 40 per cent to £2.3 million on flat sales of £13.4 million. Earnings were 11.53p a share (8.12p) and the interim dividend is 2.9p (2.0p). The shares rose 16½p to 576½p.

Bleak year ahead for North Sea oil

THE North Sea oil industry faces a bleak year, with the low crude prices that led to massive mergers and lay-offs in 1998 battering exploration and production plans, spelling doom for thousands of workers. Wood Mackenzie, the consultants based in Edinburgh, said that the amount of investment required for the new projects approved for Britain's part of the North Sea in 1998 fell by more than $4 billion (£2.45 billion) compared with the previous year — nearly two thirds. Exploration drilling activity also fell by 35 per cent last year to 58 wells spudded, down from 89 the year before. This year has got off to an even slower start, with Arthur Andersen, the consultants, saying that in the first week there was no drilling activity offshore northwest Europe.

North Sea Brent blend was priced at just above $11 a barrel yesterday after averaging $13.30 last year and no one forecasts a recovery any time soon to the $20 levels of 1996 and 1997. The oil industry provides about 384,000 jobs in the UK and accounted for about 20 per cent of industrial investment over the past ten years.

Miller Freeman boost

UNITED News & Media yesterday announced three acquisitions for Miller Freeman, its business information group. The company has bought Verecom, a US publisher and trade show organiser; Fematec, an Argentine trade show group; and Stammer, an Italian business-to-business magazine publisher. The value of the acquisitions was not disclosed, but United said it brings its investment in Miller Freeman to £40 million in recent months. Tony Tillin, chief executive of Miller Freeman, said: "These investments are steps towards our goal of becoming the prime source of business information worldwide."

HCC to buy Pepys

HCC Insurance Holdings, the New York-listed insurance group, yesterday announced that it has signed a letter of intent to buy Pepys, the parent company of Rattner MacKenzie, the Lloyd's of London insurance broker. Terms of the deal were not disclosed but the agreement involves a combination of cash and HCC shares. It is expected to be closed by the end of January. Rattner was formed in 1989 and operates primarily as a reinsurance broker in the accident and health markets. Its clients include many Lloyd's underwriters and insurance companies, particularly in the US and Europe.

Oasis picks chairman

OASIS HEALTHCARE, the Ofex-listed company that operates dental practices, has appointed Ron Trenter as chairman. Mr Trenter, 54, has been acting as a consultant to the company for a number of months, and fills the post that has been vacant since May last year. The group has also appointed Joe King, who has a background in pharmacy, as deputy chairman. Oasis also announced that it plans to raise up to £1.2 million by the placing of up to 12.3 million shares. The money will be used for acquisitions, in line with the group's ambition to expand its number of dental practices to 100.

RM wins PFI contract

RM, a supplier of IT services to the education sector, yesterday announced a £43 million contract under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to manage the IT requirements of schools in the Dudley local education authority. The company said that it was the largest and most ambitious project of its kind, servicing some 105 schools in the area over a ten-year period. Richard Girling, chief executive, said that the contract "is further evidence of the company's success in broadening its core capabilities. We look forward to continued growth in this area over the forthcoming year."

The high cost of compliance

Meeting PAYE regulations is putting an unfair burden on employers, says Leslie Ferrar

Late last year much press interest was generated by an Inland Revenue-sponsored report that illustrated the cost to employers of compliance with PAYE regulations. The report by Bath University academics revealed that the costs to business for 1995-96 was more than £1 billion, with smaller businesses being hardest hit because they were unable to enjoy either economies of scale or the cashflow advantage of docking the pay of employees before paying the money to the Revenue.

The Government welcomed the report and cannot be accused of ignoring the impact of tax compliance burdens on employers. In his pre-Budget statement in November, the Chancellor promised the extension of existing Revenue/Contributions Agency helplines to include VAT, which would give a one-stop tax advice shop. The merger of the Revenue and CA next year will also help, though a much greater move — the alignment of tax and national insurance — is still apparently taboo.

But even in the relatively short time since the 1995-96 tax year, PAYE compliance burdens employers face have increased and will do so even more in future. This year alone has seen several burdensome obligations placed on their shoulders.

The Teaching and Higher Education Bill may not have been obvious required reading for employers, so the provisions dealing with student loans may come as a surprise. The set-up costs of allowing student loans taken out after last August to be calculated and then repaid via the PAYE system are estimated to be anything up to £90 million, while clauses giving young people statutory paid time off for study or training should account for £130 million. This takes practical effect from April 6, 2000.

At the same time, employers will have to pay the new working families tax credit and disabled person's tax credit, which has already been the subject of protest from smaller businesses, which fear they would have to pay more in credit than they owed in tax, leaving them needing cash advances to stay in business.

The record-keeping needed to administer the proposed national minimum wage also threatens to be costly and extensive. The rules will apply to far more employees than had been expected — records will have to be kept and calculations performed for any staff earning less than £1,000 per month, with no pro-rata rules for part-time workers.



Leslie Ferrar says PAYE requirements will increase

This comes at a time when many companies are struggling to assess the impact of the Working Time Regulations, which came into force on October 1. Once again, the calculation of opt-outs, rest breaks, holiday entitlement and the like represent further administrative burdens. With all these additional costs since 1995-96, the Bath report's assessment that compliance costs for small companies had effectively doubled since 1981-82 may already be an underestimate. But why have costs risen?

After all, since the last review, there have been developments that should have reduced costs: multiple tax rates have been reduced; fewer coding adjustments and many employees are now paid monthly, not weekly.

It would seem that for all the investment by businesses they have been running to stand still on PAYE compliance, which has got more complex and expensive as more responsibilities have been transferred from tax authority to taxpayer.

And not only on PAYE issues, which affect mostly the small to medium-sized sector. Big corporates have got to cope with the corporate tax self-assessment system, which will put the whole issue of tax compliance much higher up the corporate agenda.

Companies that have opted for the new quarterly payments system will have to pay five years' tax in the next four, and work out how to assess whole-year profits months in advance. And there are penalties for getting it wrong and greater powers of inquiry for the Revenue.

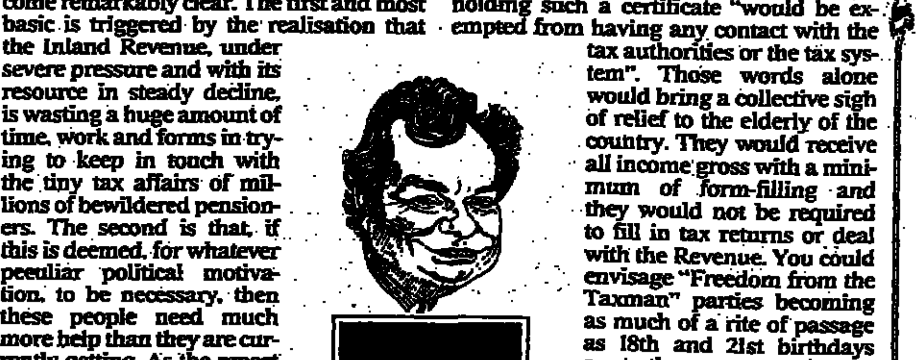
The Bath report suggested switching some compliance burdens from employers to employees. But with self-assessment, individuals have probably got enough to cope with. Employers' new year resolutions must simply be to get systems and procedures in good order.

Leslie Ferrar is a tax partner in KPMG's Human Resources Solutions Group

Age-old problem of taxing the over-65s

LAST YEAR John Andrews retired from what was, at that point, Coopers & Lybrand. He had been head of tax. He was immediate past president of the Chartered Institute of Taxation (CIOT). His thoughts turned to the years ahead. It is remarkable how retirement concentrates the mind. Now he has popped up again as head of the CIOT's Low Income Tax Reform Group with a report titled *Older People on Low Incomes — the Case for a Friendlier Tax System.*

Now no one is suggesting that retired partners from the Big Five accounting firms are remotely close to the classification of "low incomes". But the mind obviously starts to think a bit about the plight of those already in the years ahead. And once it does, then several tax issues become remarkably clear. The first and most basic is triggered by the realisation that the Inland Revenue, under severe pressure and with its resource in steady decline, is wasting a huge amount of time, work and forms in trying to keep in touch with the tiny tax affairs of millions of bewildered pensioners. The second is that, if this is deemed, for whatever peculiar political motivation, to be necessary, then these people need much more help than they are currently getting. As the report points out: "The number of older taxpayers as a proportion of the total population is set to rise into the new millennium at a time when the resources of the Inland Revenue are set to decline and where older people, as a group, may not be viewed as a priority when assessing customer service needs."



Robert Bruce

And the Revenue in any case is cutting back its resources and switching much more to a process-based service. The lengthy and sometimes labyrinthine nature of sorting out an elderly person's tax affairs will shortly be impossible to provide. For example, as the report says, "plans announced by the Inland Revenue in 1992 to provide every taxpayer with 'a single point of contact' in dealing with their tax affairs have quietly been shelved".

But in any case there is little point in the Revenue pointing any of its precious resource at pensioners. The Revenue is increasingly aimed at putting resource where it can maximise growth in tax revenue received. Pensioners, by and large, have very little money and owe still less tax on it. From a business point of view, it makes no sense to collect it except through a very simple system.

As Andrews sees it: "They spend an awful amount of time with a lot of people for not very much tax. People over the age of 65 do sit down to a relatively predictable income." So why not keep the tax-gathering process to an equally simple regime?

The report suggests a tax-exemption certificate as the main tool. These would be available to people over the age of 65 whose income was below a specific figure and was not expected to rise above it in the future. That would cover the vast majority of elderly people in this country.

But the important point is that anyone holding such a certificate "would be exempted from having any contact with the tax authorities or the tax system". Those words alone would bring a collective sigh of relief to the elderly of the country. They would receive all income gross with a minimum of form-filling and they would not be required to fill in tax returns or deal with the Revenue. You could envisage "Freedom from the Taxman" parties becoming as much of a rite of passage as 18th and 21st birthdays are to the young.

The second major suggestion in the report is that we follow the example of America and Canada in establishing some form of volunteering system whereby the equivalent of barefoot doctors provide advice to elderly taxpayers. The report suggests an experiment in such tax volunteers.

In America they are normally retired people themselves, who undergo training by the tax authorities and can then help particular groups of low-income taxpayers to sort out their affairs.

But, in the end, the issue is not one of simple help for people who need it. It is not some sort of "soft" charity-based decision. It should be a hard-nosed business decision for the Inland Revenue.

"It's not going to cost an arm and a leg," said Andrews, and, as the report makes clear: "There would be significant administrative benefits to the Inland Revenue. It has long acknowledged that it is not cost-effective to pursue individuals for small amounts of tax."

AND OTHER BUSINESS

Ex-president's retirement task

THE Chartered Institute of Taxation is chuffed that so many people have taken kindly to its report on pensioners' tax problems, produced by its recently retired past president, John Andrews. Its council meeting this week learnt that much coverage is expected in the many magazines for retired people. Action was suggested to get hold of copies of these articles. Just before a working party was set up to do so, someone came up with the obvious solution. As Andrews was now retired, presumably he already subscribed to them. Could he look out for coverage? Andrews smiled, but in a very fixed sort of a way.

Plotting a way up

IT IS conspiracy time, again, at Moorgate Place. Now is the time when council members scramble around to pick up signatures of support in an effort to get a foot on the rickety ladder to the presidency. Ever hopeful is Michael Groom, whose image has been improved by his work chairing council meetings. But cheeky chappie David Hunt, of Pannell Kerr Forster, has flung his hat into the ring. Quite how his line in alternative humour will go down in ministerial meetings is hard to judge. The tax duo of Peter Wyman, still immersed in PricewaterhouseCoopers post-merger machinations, and Anita Monteith, the tax faculty chairman, are expected to wait for another time. The tough triumvirate now in power is seen as a hard act to follow. One council member said: "We don't want a wet nellie following on." Successful candidates will be announced next week.

Count them out

THE Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (the ACCA) has found some more people to upset. The Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), the pan-profession body training second-tier accountants, which the ACCA abandoned in order to set up its own competing organisation, has been very successful in negotiating exemptions recently. All other accounting bodies have been giving AAT members more exemptions or greater recognition if they attempt the senior bodies' exams. Except for the perpetual odd man out, the ACCA. It has withdrawn some exemptions, though not for its own second-tier body. Nothing changes.

ROBERT BRUCE

Equities tumble as gilts advance

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
646	385	Allied Domecq	487	- 19	5.1	13.0
412½	291½	Balmoral (PPV)	314	- 7	6.0	14.9
42	7	Burn Stewart	14½	- ½	..	..
795	432	Diageo	665½	- 28½	3.0	20.2
900	675	Glenmorangie A	680		2.7	18.5
325	225	Highland Distill	384		4.4	12.1
244	115	Matthew Clark	242		6.7	8.2
59½	15½	Merrydown W	28½		..	..
3021½	725	SA Breweries	934½	-125	3.9	14.0

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

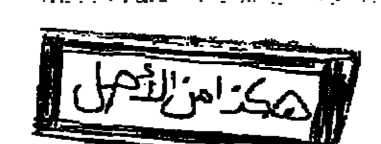
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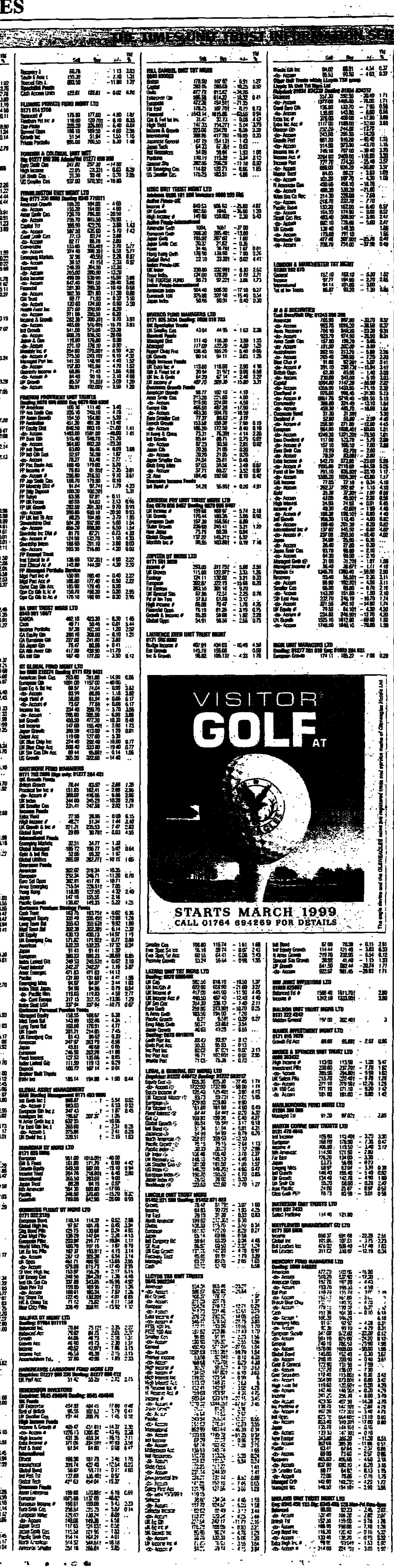
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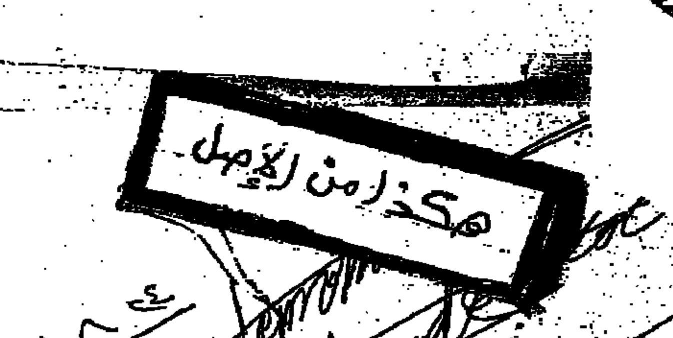
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Fixing date of voluntary liquidation

In re Continental Assurance Company of London plc (in liquidation)

Before Mr Justice Carnwath

[Judgment December 18]

The Insurance Companies (Winding Up) Rules (SI 1985 No 95 (L2)) were designed to be a comprehensive code and applied to all liquidations whether compulsory or voluntary.

In order to avoid an otherwise inexplicable anomaly, it was necessary, in the case of a voluntary liquidation, to read the reference to the date of the winding up order, in those paragraphs which referred specifically to a winding up order, as a reference to the resolution which constituted the commencement of the winding up under the Insolvency Act 1986 and the point at which the company went into liquidation.

Mr Justice Carnwath so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division when giving directions under section 112 of the 1986 Act relating to the winding up of Continental Assurance Company of London plc.

The two joint liquidators, Christopher John Hughes and David Julian Buchler were, respectively, applicant and respondent for the purpose of determining whether claims under eight prize indemnity insurance policies and one promotional contingency insurance policy were to be valued on "a just estimate of value" or a "return of premium" basis under the 1985 Rules.

Rule 6 of the 1985 Rules provides: "Except in relation to amounts which have fallen due for payment before the date of the winding up order, the holder of a general business policy shall be admitted as a creditor in relation to his policy without proof for an amount equal to the value of the policy and for this purpose the value of a policy shall be determined in accordance with Schedule 1."

Paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 provides: "(1) This paragraph applies in relation to liabilities under a general business policy not dealt with by paragraph 1.

"(2) The value to be attributed to those liabilities shall (a) if the terms of the policy provide for a repayment of premium upon the early termination of the policy or the policy is expressed to run from one definite date to another ... Be the greater of the following two amounts (i) the amount (if any) which under the terms of policy would have been repayable on early termination of the policy had the policy terminated on the date of the winding-up order, and (ii) where the policy is expressed to run from one definite date to another ... such proportion of the last premium paid as is proportionate to the unexpired portion of the period in respect of which that premium was paid: and (b) in any other case, be a just estimate of that value".

Miss Elizabeth Gloster, QC and Mr Stephen Atherton for the applicant; Mr Gabriel Moss, QC and Miss Felicity Toube for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE CARNWATH said that the prize indemnity policies concerned were designed to indemnify football clubs against the additional expense that might be incurred in the event of success.

The joint liquidators had valued and admitted claims under the nine contracts on the basis of a "just estimate" of value, pursuant to paragraph 2(2)(b) of Schedule 1 to the 1985 Rules.

That basis of valuation was challenged by the company's reinsurers. They contended that they should be valued on a "return of premium" basis, under paragraph 2(2)(a). That would, as his Lordship understood it, result in no liability falling on the reinsurers since they were responsible for liabilities relating to claims, not for returns of premium.

There were two principal issues: (i) Did the 1985 Rules apply at all to the liquidation? (ii) If so, did paragraph 2(2)(a) apply?

His Lordship summarised the development of the legislation from the Life Assurance Act 1872 to the Insurance Companies Act 1982 and referred to *Transit Casualty Company v The Policy Protection Board* ([1992] 2 Lloyd's Rep 358).

The 1985 Rules were made under section 59 of the Insurance Companies Act 1982 subsection (1) of which provided:

"Rules may be made under [section 411 of the 1986 Act] ... for determining the amount of the liabilities of an insurance company to policy holders of any class or description for the purposes of proof in a winding up..."

Rule 6, which was directly in issue in the present case, was headed "Valuation of general business policies".

Miss Gloster's submission that the rules did not apply rested on two alternative arguments: first, that the rules only applied to companies carrying on long-term business, either alone or in conjunction with general business, and had no application to companies carrying on solely general business: second, that they applied only to compulsory liquidations, and not to a voluntary liquidation as here.

The second point had more substance, since there was an apparent anomaly in the drafting. Prima facie, one would expect the code to apply to all forms of winding up, compulsory or voluntary.

In all previous legislation dating back to the 1872 Act, it was stated specifically that the code was intended to apply where the company was being "wound up by the court, or subject to the supervision of the court, or voluntarily..."

Section 59 of the 1982 Act did not refer expressly to voluntary winding up.

It referred generally to "proof in a winding up". The natural reading would be that it applied to any form of winding up, compulsory or voluntary.

That view was reinforced by the fact that the rules were to be made under section 411 of the 1986 Act, which applied to all types of winding up.

Turning to the 1985 Rules, however, there were indications that they were designed to deal with winding up following an order of the court, rather than voluntary winding up.

The rules could not be made to apply effectively to voluntary liquidations, unless some additional words were read into those paragraphs which referred specifically to a winding up order.

Mr Moss suggested that the reference to the date of the winding up order should, in the case of a voluntary liquidation, be read as a reference to the resolution which constituted the commencement of the winding up under the 1986 Act (see sections 84 and 86) and the point at which the company "goes into liquidation" (see section 247(2)).

In his Lordship's view, this was an occasion where it was permissible to add words to the statute to avoid what would otherwise be an inexplicable anomaly.

All the previous legalisation dealt with voluntary and compulsory liquidations. There appeared to be no sensible reason for excluding voluntary liquidations from a scheme which, as Mr Justice Hoffmann had observed in *Transit*, was designed to be exhaustive.

The rule-making power in the statute envisaged rules applicable to winding up generally. In the absence of any other indication, the natural assumption would be that the rules would cover the same ground. Mr Moss's suggested addition was a natural one, and was supported by the scheme of the 1985 Act. His Lordship adopted his proposal.

His Lordship concluded that the 1985 Rules applied to each of the nine contracts. In the eight football cases the applicable provision was paragraph 2(2)(b) requiring a "just estimate" taking account of hindsight. In the promotional contingency policy case, paragraph 2(2)(a) applied and the value fell to be assessed on a "repayment of premium" basis.

Solicitors: D. J. Freeman; Clyde & Co.

Appeal court not limited by terms of leave

Yorkshire Bank plc v Hall and Others

Before Lord Justice Mantell, Lord Justice Robert Walker and Mr Justice Kay

[Judgment December 18]

Once an appeal reached the Court of Appeal for hearing, the court's power to regulate its own proceedings and to permit new points to be taken could not be rigidly limited by the terms on which leave to appeal had been granted.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing appeals by the defendants, Harry Hall, John Hall, Richard Hall, Mrs Dorothy Mann and Mrs Pauline Hall, from

(i) a decision of Judge Maddocks sitting as a judge of the High Court in Leeds on November 9, 1995 making money judgments and orders for possession in favour of the plaintiffs, Yorkshire Bank plc, against particular defendants or groups of defendants and possession orders for the residences of Harry and John Hall;

(ii) a decision of Mr Justice Jonathan Parker, Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster, on January 16, 1997, also in Leeds, dismissing their applications to set aside Judge Maddocks' order;

(iii) a decision of Mr Justice Jonathan Parker on the same occasion dismissing an appeal from an order of District Judge Bellamy striking out an action which the Halls had commenced against the plaintiffs.

Mr John Macdonald, QC and Mr Nicholas Le Poidevin for all the defendants except Mr Harry Hall; Mr Ali Malek, QC and Mr Jonathan Davies-Jones for the plaintiffs; Mr Harry Hall in person.

LORD JUSTICE ROBERT WALKER said Yorkshire Bank had made secured loans to the Halls to enable them to take up further shares in Bradford Investments plc in which they were together the controlling shareholders.

Lord Justice Beldam and Lord Justice Millett had granted leave on February 2, 1996 to appeal from that part of the order of Judge Maddocks which concerned interest paid on the loans by Bradford Investments and there had been a further hearing on July 30, 1996 as to the extent of the partial leave which had been granted.

Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Judge had granted leave to appeal from the two orders of the Vice-Chancellor on June 27, 1997, when it was directed that all appeals should be held together.

The County Courts Act 1984 gave the High Court and the county court powers to transfer county court proceedings to the High Court. Changes to those powers made by the the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 had come into force on July 1, 1991. The effect of the change was to remove the financial ceiling on the county court's jurisdiction.

In consequence of those changes, Judge Maddocks, sitting as a judge of the High Court, could only have made the possession orders which he did by deconsolidating the proceedings and transferring them back to the county court and then making the orders as if he were sitting in the county court. By Order 59, rule 1B the defendants would not then have required leave to appeal against the possession orders.

Justice required that the defendants should not be shut out from the appeal, which they would otherwise be able to make as of right, by an error of jurisdiction.

His Lordship also dealt with a submission made by Mr Macdonald on the assumption that he did or might need leave to extend the appeal. In *Greenalls Management Ltd v Canavan* (*The Times* May 19, 1997) Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, had identified three categories of leave to appeal which might be granted: general leave; general leave accompanied by a non-mandatory indication of those grounds on which the appellant appeared to have an arguable case; and leave to appeal on one or more particular points or issues.

Lord Woolf had said that in cases of the third category, it was still open to an appellant to seek to rely on the grounds in relation to which leave had not been given if, and only if, he got the leave of the court to rely on those grounds.

Mr Macdonald had referred to two previous Court of Appeal decisions which had not been cited in *Greenalls Management Ltd v Canavan*. In *John Redman Ltd v Filecroft Ltd* ([1991] 1 WLR 692) the court held that it had no power to review or entertain an appeal from the decision of a single lord justice imposing the requirement of a payment into court as a condition of granting leave to appeal.

In *Daisystar Ltd v Town and Country Building Society* (*The Times* February 14, 1992; [1992] 1 WLR 390), the court reached the same conclusion where a single lord justice had refused leave.

In his Lordship's view, there was no inconsistency because those cases were concerned with whether there would ever be a substantive hearing of the appeal. In each case the single lord justice had reached a decision which created either a conditional or an absolute bar to the substantive appeal being heard at all.

But once an appeal reached the Court of Appeal for hearing, its power to regulate its own proceedings, and to permit new points to be taken, could not be rigidly limited by the terms in which leave had been granted: see paragraphs 18 and 19 of *Practice Direction (Court of Appeal: Leave to Appeal and Skeleton Arguments)* (*The Times* November 23, 1998; [1999] 1 WLR 2).

Nevertheless, the power should be sparingly exercised, for the reasons stated in the practice direction. Where, as in the instant case, a point had been considered twice by the full court, and leave to appeal on that point expressly refused on each occasion, it would very rare indeed for the appellant to be permitted to reopen the point at the hearing of the appeal.

Lord Justice Mantell and Mr Justice Kay agreed.

Solicitors: Ingham Clegg & Crowther, Preston; Hammond Suddards, Leeds.

● *Reprints of* Times Law Reports *in monthly parts and annual bound volumes from 1990 are available from T & T Clark Ltd, 59 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2LQ (Tel: 0131 225 4703; Fax: 0131 220 4260).*

Costs order against non-party

Wiggins v Richard Read (Transport) Ltd

Before Lord Justice Roch, Lord Justice Waller and Lord Justice Ward

[Judgment December 8]

It was important for the judge at first instance deciding whether to make a costs order against a non-party to litigation under Order 62, rule 2(4) of the Rules of the Supreme Court to be aware that Note 62/2/7 in *The Supreme Court Practice 1999* gave limited assistance. Reference should be made to the full list of principles set out in *Symphony Group plc v Hodgson* ([1994] QB 179) which was referred to in the note.

The Court of Appeal so stated when, inter alia, allowing an appeal by Ronald Wiggins and Ruth Wiggins against an order of Judge Darwall Smith at Gloucester County Court on November 20, 1997 whereby she ordered that the appellants, who were not parties to the action, should pay the costs of the defendant, Richard Read (Transport) Ltd, after a trial of a preliminary issue in which she determined that the plaintiff, David Wiggins, the appellants' disabled son, who was suing by his brother and next friend, Robert Wiggins, did not have a cause of action.

Mr Raoul Downey for the appellants; Mr Martin Edwards, who did not appear below, for the defendant.

LORD JUSTICE WALLER said that Note 62/2/7 set out guidance to the judge at first instance when deciding whether to order costs against a non-party to litigation.

The categories of case where an order could be made and the guiding principles were set out by Lord Justice Balcombe in *Symphony Group plc v Hodgson* (at pp192-3) which was cited in the note.

Lord Justice Balcombe had identified nine guidelines. It was important to note that in relation to the sixth guideline the note did not include all the words of Lord Justice Balcombe.

Because of the omission of some of those words, the sixth principle was elided and misshapen.

It suggested the procedure was a summary one to which the ordinary rules relating to costs were not necessarily applicable and suggested that there should be a departure from ordinary principles only if there were a close connection between the plaintiff and the third party.

Lord Justice Balcombe had in fact stated that the exception was to the general rule relating to non-availability of evidence.

His Lordship agreed with the appellants that a false impression was given that the general rule referred to by Lord Justice Balcombe was one relating to costs against non-parties when it was not.

LORD JUSTICE WARD said that the judge had been misled by the note thinking that the closeness of a third party to litigation on its own allowed a costs order to be made against that third party.

It could not ever be enough simply to show a close relationship or that an action was inspired by a parent for his disabled son in order for a costs order to be made against a parent. There must be something more.

The judge did not ask whether it had been shown that the parent had consciously brought the action for his own benefit and not for his son's; or whether he had consciously encouraged a hopeless action. The appeal should be allowed.

Lord Justice Roch agreed.

Solicitors: Burroughs Day, Bristol; James Scott, Tetbury.

● *English jurisdiction Law Reports in* The Times *are compiled by reporters of the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting for England and Wales, 3 Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London, WC2A 3XN, publishers of* The Law Reports *and* The Weekly Law Reports *(Tel 0171 242 6471; http://www.lawreports.co.uk).*

Pension scheme trustee are favoured creditors

In re Thirty-Eight Building Ltd

Before Miss Heather Williamson, QC

[Judgment December 3]

For the purposes of determining whether a declaration of trust by a company in favour of its employees' pension scheme was a preference within the meaning of section 239 of the Insolvency Act 1986, the so-called creditors in whose favour the alleged preference was granted were the trustees of the pension scheme collectively.

While a trustee was usually considered as a person connected with the company, where the terms of the trust conferred a power that could be exercised for the benefit of the company or an associate of the company, such as a director or shadow director of the company, or a close relative by blood or marriage of the same, section 435(5)(b) of the 1986 Act disapplied that rule in the case of a pension scheme, even in the case of a small pension scheme whose beneficiaries consist solely of persons who were connected with the company.

Miss Heather Williamson, QC, sitting as a deputy judge in the Chancery Division, so held in a reserved judgment declaring on the respondents' summons under Order 14A of the Rules of the Supreme Court that the respondent trustees of the Saunders Retirement Benefit Scheme: Edwin Arthur Saunders, Janet Marion Saunders, Nicholas James Alexander Saunders, Simon Edwin Saunders and the Berkeley Burke Trustee Co Ltd, were not "persons connected with the company" within the meaning of section 240(1)(a) of the 1986 Act.

The plaintiffs, Frank Arthur Sims and Barry David Lewis, the liquidators of Thirty-Eight Building Ltd, had sought a declaration that the company's declaration of trust dated March 31, 1995 in favour of the first four respondents was void as a preference pursuant to section 239 of the 1986 Act.

Mr Adam Goodison for the liquidators; Mr John Randall, QC and Mr Petar Starcevic for the respondents.

HER LADYSHIP said that Thirty-Eight Building Ltd was incorporated in 1973. The first respondent was at all material times its sole director and the second respondent was its secretary. Between them they owned all 200 of the issued shares in the company. The third and fourth respondents were the sons of the first and second defendants and employees of Thirty-Eight Antiques Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the company.

In 1981 a retirement scheme was established for the benefit of the first four respondents. All five respondents were trustees of the scheme, administered by the fifth defendant, an independent trustee company.

In 1987 the trustees purchased certain land which was contracted to be sold to the company for £540,000. Only the £54,000 deposit and a repayment of about £100,000 made by cancelling a liability owed by the scheme to Thirty-Eight Antiques were ever paid.

By a declaration of trust executed on March 31, 1995 the company declared itself to be trustee for the scheme of certain land valued at £300,000 and antiques to the value of £245,157 in full and final satisfaction of the company's liability on the loan.

On December 17, 1996 the company went into creditors' voluntary liquidation. The statement of affairs showed assets of £400 and liabilities of £3,993,951, the bulk of which was described as a loan of £2,943,104 from its subsidiary.

For the declaration of trust to be avoided as a preference, it had to be proved that it was made "at a relevant time". By section 240(1) of the 1986 Act the "relevant time" meant within six months of the company going into insolvent liquidation, save in respect of a "person connected with the company (otherwise than by reason only of being its employee)", in which case the time limit was two years.

As the declaration of trust was made one year and eight months prior to the resolution of the company to go into creditors' voluntary liquidation, the transaction could not be avoided as a preference unless it was entered into for the benefit of a connected person.

By section 249 of the 19[...] person was "connected [...] company if he was a dir[...] shadow director of the com[...] an associate of such a dir[...] shadow director; or he was [...] ciate of the company.

Section 435 of the Act [...] various relationships by wh[...] sons were "associates" of on[...] er. Section 435(5)(b) of the [...] pressly excluded the rest of [...] 435(5), which defined, inte[...] trustee as the associate of [...] person where the terms of [...] confer a power that could [...] cised for the benefit of th[...] person or an associate of th[...] person, in respect of [...] scheme trusts.

Section 239(4) looked to [...] a "creditor" in the legal se[...] then treated repayment of t[...] son as the giving of a prefe[...] that creditor.

Whether that person w[...] nected with the company wa[...] mined by applying section [...] the definitions of "associate[...] tion 435 which delimited its [...] tion.

The first, second, thi[...] fourth respondents were e[...] sons connected with the co[...] although the fifth respond[...] an independent company, i[...] only as the trustee of the re[...] benefit scheme.

There was no basis on w[...] exception for pension [...] could be taken as anythi[...] than its face value, even in [...] of a small pension scheme [...] beneficiaries were limited [...] sons who were connected [...] company.

In the present situation, [...] vant creditor for the purp[...] section 239(4) was the five r[...] ents collectively. Owing to [...] ception in section 435(5)[...] creditor was not rendered [...] ciate.

The questions on the r[...] ents' summons had therefo[...] answered in the negativ[...] court made no decision as t[...] er the exception in section [...] would have applied in the [...] of the fifth defendant as a tr[...] the scheme.

Solicitors: Isadore G[...]; Keely Beedham, Solihull.

Court documents stay secre[t] after hearing aborted

SmithKline Beecham Biologicals SA v Connaught Laboratories Inc

Before Mr Justice Laddie

[Judgment October 30]

At the heart of Order 24, Rule 14A of the Rules of the Supreme Court on whether facts were in the public domain was the factual issue of whether the documents in question had been read to or by the court, or referred to in open court.

Thus where confidential material had been incorporated in skeleton arguments which the court had read prior to the case being opened but the petitioner aborted the hearing, that rule had no application and that material remained confidential.

Mr Justice Laddie so held in the Chancery Division, in declining to make an order disapplying that rule to documents designated as confidential by an agreement dated December 31, 1997 between the solicitors for SmithKline Beecham Biologicals SA and for Connaught Laboratories.

Order 24, rule 14A provides: "Any undertaking, whether express or implied, not to use a document for any purposes other than those of the proceedings in which it is disclosed shall cease to apply to such document after it has been read to or by the court, or referred to, in open court, unless the court for special reasons has otherwise ordered on the application of a party or of the person to whom the document belongs."

Mr David Young, QC and Mr Adrian Speck for the petitioner; Mr Roger Henderson, QC and Mr Daniel Alexander for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE LADDIE said that for the petitioner it had been argued, relying on *Derby v Weldon (No 2)* (*The Times* October 20, 1988), that because his Lordship had been sent all the documents in the reading list before the trial commenced and because there was a trial, be it ever so short, both those documents and all the doc[...] referred to in them had bee[...] by the court, or referred, to, [...] court" and were released fo[...] dissemination.

But the approach in *Derb[y v Wel]don (No 2)* had no applic[...] this case: for here, there ha[...] no question of any contest[...] hearing, no discussion of th[...] tons, the expert reports, the [...] statements, or any of th[...] ments other than the paten[...]

In substance, his Lordsh[...] held, as a result of what [...] read in private in his room [...] the light of the responden[...] sion not to contest the issu[...] the patent would be revoke[...]

That was no different to [...] cation, in open court, of a[...] tion to revoke after a hea[...] camera. Accordingly the pe[...] had failed to show that th[...] ments they wished to disc[...] within Order 24, Rule 14A.

Solicitors: Stringer Saul; [...] Bird.

NEW ON VIDEO

Gary Oldman finds himself Lost in Space

PAGE 36

THE TIMES

ARTS

THEATRE

The Lawrence inquiry makes chilling drama



ꞮUAL ART: Amateurish? Stuffy? The old insults no longer apply to the thoroughly modernised Royal Academy, says **Richard Cork**

A breath of fresh air in Piccadilly

hree years ago the Royal Academy was racked by a well-publicised financial scan- The much-liked bursar, r Clark, was found of embezzling nearly)00. Worse still, the in- ıg secretary, David Gor- vas horrified to discover ıo audited accounts had done since 1993.

eventually found out ıe Academy had been op- g at an annual deficit of llion in 1994 and 1995, as well on the way to an- one. "All our reserves een swallowed," Gordon s, "and everyone was in a of anxiety." The RA's lent, *Sir Philip Dowson*, ded the bursar's fraud as rible blow and very dis- ıg. If you'd asked me pre- y who I could trust in the emy, I'd have said *him*." such a venerable institu- vhich prided itself on ro- ndependence from state ly, the crisis was especial- rtifying. But now, as the epares to open its much- ded exhibition *Monet in)th Century* on January different mood prevails ırlington House. In the inancial year it made a)00 operating surplus. ummer the Heritage Lot- und awarded the Acade- 4.1 million to finish the ation of its main galler- s accumulated deficit has reduced to £500,000.

for the imminent Monet hopes are high that it *ttract more than 600,000* rs. Advance ticket sales reached 108,000 already. -booking record for any h art exhibition, even *h the entry charge is set* ı unprecedentedly high n anticipation of the ls, a large T-shaped mar- has been erected in the *ard to house* a ticket of- ıookshop, café and other ies, despite bitter com- s about the expected from other organisations *premises in the Burling-* ouse quadrangle.

w has the Academy man- o restore pummelled mo- nd engineer such a turna- l in its fortunes? One im- nt reform centred on es- hing two new commit- strengthen the previous- aky grasp of finances. udit committee now en- tough monetary disci- The management com- harnesses Academicians, trustees and staff to co-ordinate the RA's increasingly convoluted activities.

According to Dowson, it has proved "enormously helpful" to Council, the Academy's governing body. But he admits that the management committee's advent provoked "two stiff debates among Academicians who feared that their power would be eroded". Dowson, who confesses he had no idea when elected about how much of his life the presidency would consume, thinks that "the Academy, like many historical institutions, outgrew itself. We now have a turnover of £15 million, and recent experience has made us stronger."

That is why the RA is transforming itself into a formidable fundraiser. The Exhibitions Patrons Group, set up only in 1997, has already added over £1 million to the Academy's coffers from donors, foundations and trusts. A new café is now open in the well of the Sackler Wing, and the shows held in the last 18 months have made a huge contribution to the RA's economic wellbeing.

Sensation alone attracted almost 300,000 visitors, making it the most highly attended contemporary art exhibition in Britain for half a century. Even *Victorian Fairy Painting*, widely regarded beforehand as a frivolous subject, brought in a buoyant 110,000 visitors. And the recent survey of Picasso's ceramics claimed a healthy tally of 175,000.

But is the Academy in danger of concerning itself too much with cash, at the expense of its primary mission as an art organisation? Norman Rosenthal, the ebullient exhibitions secretary, seems to think so. "Everything is about money in these heady new Labour days," he says. "Marketing, Management and Money — the three big M words. I hate it. I like art."

When the Academy moved to Burlington House from Trafalgar Square in 1868, it was expected to dedicate itself to educational pursuits. Hence the British Government's willingness to lease a prime Piccadilly location to the Academy for 999 years at a peppercorn rent. The benefits of such an arrangement remain vast; and David Gordon is the first to insist that the RA, in its determination "to become a more professional outfit", must at the same time "keep the flame alight". In other words its fundamental aim must always be to foster appreciation of the visual arts in Britain, just as its first President, Sir Joshua Reynolds, hoped when the institution was founded in 1768.

But how? Many visitors to *Sensation* might have imagined that Academicians wholeheartedly backed the provocative new directions explored by artists in the show. The truth is far more complex. Rosenthal was defiantly in favour of the exhibition. But some Academicians were aghast at the work it contained, in particular Marcus Harvey's notorious Myra Hindley portrait.

Several of the institution's most notable artist-members, including Gillian Ayres and Michael Sandle, resigned in protest. And Dowson says that the internal arguments about *Sensation* were bitter. "There were many things I didn't like in the show," he admits, "but that's not the point. It was a very important exhibition. In a MORI survey gauging the public reaction to *Sensation*, 91 per cent of visitors said that the Academy has a responsibility to show art even if it shocks or causes offence. Like it or loathe it, the work was serious and deserved to be looked at in a Central London gallery."

Drawn exclusively from the collection built up by Charles Saatchi, *Sensation* attracted a new young audience to Burlington House. But if they returned to sample last year's Summer Show, they may well have felt puzzled and disappointed. Apart from Gary Hume, who displayed a large and arresting new painting, none of the artists in *Sensation* was included. A seismic fault still separates the stalwarts who exhibit in the Summer Show from the young generation who have made new British art of the 1990s internationally acclaimed.

Compared with the intolerable stuffiness of the Academy 50 years ago, when the apoplectic President Sir Alfred Munnings railed against Picasso and modernity in general, Dowson is an exemplary liberal. "Over the past ten years the Summer Show has changed extraordinarily," he claims. "It is far less academic than before." But the exhibition still fails to represent many of the most outstanding British artists, from Sir Anthony Caro and Lucian Freud to Damien Hirst and Rachel Whiteread.

So does the RA have any plans, in its future exhibition programme, to expand its involvement with the young? "I would love to say that we will be doing *Sensation* after *Sensation*," says Rosenthal. "Of course one would like to keep the new audience, and there is a big hunger for contemporary art. Maybe the summer exhibition should change after 2000: people still think the Academy is stuffy, with old Norman as an irritant."

But exhibitions must be planned three years in advance, and such a schedule militates against organising a topical exhibition at precisely the right moment. Perhaps that is why the RA's main shows over the coming year concentrate on the past, culminating in September with a grand retrospective of paintings by Anthony Van Dyck.

Even so, Rosenthal is excited about staging three large installations of contemporary sculpture each year in the RA courtyard. The scheme commenced last year with 60 cast-iron figures by Antony Gormley called *Critical Mass*, standing, crouching, dangling and even climbing up the walls.

Tony Cragg will follow this summer, and Rosenthal says "it would be great to have artists from abroad like Jeff Koons and his giant puppy made of flowers". Planning permission has been obtained to modify the courtyard, and even move the hallowed bronze statue of Reynolds nearer the archway to make room for spectacular showpieces.

Another source of excitement is located just behind Burlington House, where the Victorian premises at 6 Burlington Gardens will be vacated by the Museum of Mankind in 2000. The RA, lacking a lecture theatre and desperate for space to accommodate its ever-expanding educational activities, wants to take over Sir James Pennethorne's resplendent edifice.

Michael Hopkins has been chosen to prepare a feasibility study, and Gordon feels that "the Government, in its quest for better education, should let us take this building on". Dowson, a distinguished architect himself, would also like it to become a showcase for modern architecture. "Nothing is more important than the built environment," he declares, "and artists don't realise what architects are up to. We live in a mad world with planning. We urgently need a place where chairmen of housing committees can go and see the finest work by contemporary architects."

Above all, though, Dowson nurtures a vision for the RA as a whole. "In my dream," he says, "I'd like to see the Academy more accessible to the public. Providing enjoyment is vital, of course, but I particularly want us to be more open. I suspect the RA can seem a bit historical, but it's not — it's breaking ground, and ought to share that excitement as an institution for everyone. Reynolds started it as a gift to the nation, and the public should feel it belongs to them."

PAUL ROGERS

Preparing for next week's Monet blockbuster show, Royal Academy Secretary David Gordon recalls joining a debt-ridden organisation that had not done its accounts for two years

Hanging out with a legacy

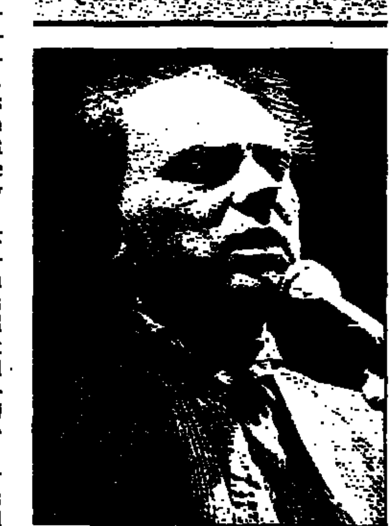


With a new album *Back On Top* ready for release in March, and a new nine-piece band to be broken in prior to a string of dates in America, Van Morrison elected to play his first show of the year on Tuesday night in the enchanting if somewhat sedate environs of Barnstaple on the North Devon coast. It nearly didn't happen. Thanks to a bout of flu, there was some doubt as to whether Morrison would take the stage of the 500-seat Queen's Theatre at all and, once he had done so, uncertainty as to how long he would stay.

An undemonstrative performer at the best of times, Morrison looked almost comically discomfited to begin with as he stood to attention in his peaked cap and shades and the band struck up *Jackie Wilson Said*. "Let it all hang out," he barked, his tone and posture suggesting the exact opposite, while the musicians tiptoed around the arrangement as if there was a baby asleep in the next room.

Strapping on a Les Paul guitar Morrison picked out a few chords with a distracted air as he wandered through a selection of less exposed items from his vast back catalogue, including a funky *Dweller on the Threshhold* and a politely swinging *These Dreams of You*.

After remonstrating with various members of the band during a faltering version of *If You Love Me*, Morrison abruptly exited the stage, leaving keyboard player John Savannah to sing *Warm Love* with the back of his head towards the audience. Despite the mood of crisis in the air, this was what the band (with whom Morrison never rehearses) had been doing all week, and their playing became noticeably more relaxed in his unexpected absence. Morrison too seemed to benefit from the respite, and when he returned to take command of *You Make Me Feel So Free*, his performance shifted up a gear.



Exiting, stage left: Van Morrison

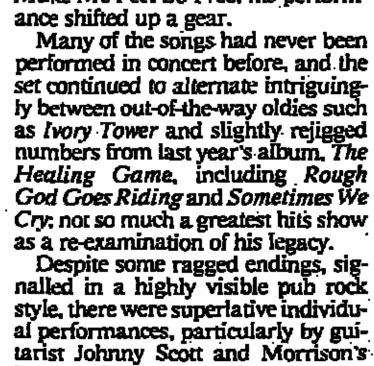
Many of the songs had never been performed in concert before, and the set continued to alternate intriguingly between out-of-the-way oldies such as *Ivory Tower* and slightly rejigged numbers from last year's album, *The Healing Game*, including *Rough God Goes Riding* and *Sometimes We Cry*: not so much a greatest hits show as a re-examination of his legacy.

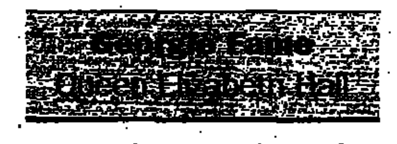
Despite some ragged endings, signalled in a highly visible pub rock style, there were superlative individual performances, particularly by guitarist Johnny Scott and Morrison's long-serving saxophonist, Pee Wee Ellis.

Things finally began to gel on a gorgeous version of *Georgia on My Mind*, a song ideally suited to Morrison's gruff staccato delivery, and the one moment of the night when he seemed to find the energy to dig into the emotion of the lyric. After that, it was solos all round during *Symphony Sid*, but Morrison's presence was diminishing fast. He managed a soulful *Have I Told You Lately* and a perfunctory *Moondance* then took his leave, still a work in progress after all these years.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Old-time organ grinder





He has outlasted most of the teen idols that he backed at the dawn of rock'n'roll. Long after the last Robbie Williams poster has been consigned to the dustbin, Georgie Fame will still be out on the road.

Fame was never the most conventional pop star, and this celebration of his 40 years in showbusiness also ran along its own lines. Anyone who came expecting to hear red-hot, Flamingo Club-style R&B would probably have gone away somewhat puzzled.

Yeh Yeh flashed by at the very beginning, as if he was glad to get it out of the way, a strangely lugubrious Toots Thielemans ballad closed the first half, and the homely tones of Hoagy Carmichael's *Rockin' Chair* rang out at the encore.

Think of Fame and you instantly see images of him sweating over the console of a battered Hammond organ. But he has always had a habit of switching hats. This evening was, metaphorically speaking, an occasion for his snappiest jazz fedora, pulled low over his brow as he crooned in front of the BBC Big Band.

And shouted too. He is not the gentlest of vocalists; even so, an overbearing brass section kept shouldering him aside. Fans of Stan Kenton would have approved, but for the rest of us this was a simple case of too much big band, not enough singer.

Some overfussy arrangements proved a hindrance too, especially in conjunction with his sometimes mannered, horn-like vocals. It all worked best when Fame and his conductor Steve Gray stuck to relatively simple, riff-based arrangements redolent of the Basie swing machine or the Ray Charles band. Chico O'Farrill's setting of the old hit *Bonnie and Clyde* supplied plenty of recoil.

The moments when the orchestra dissolved into a smaller unit were always telling, as in the opening of *When My Dreamboat Comes Home*, played in tribute to one of Fame's vocal mentors, Mose Allison. Gray's *City Life* strutted along in cool urban style and cheekily inserted subliminal quotes from *Little Rootie Tootie* and other Monk tunes.

Chet Baker received a namecheck on *But Not For Me*, which featured one of Fame's trademark vocalese solos. Ingenious, yes, but the rare occasions when he slid across the stage to the trusty organ were even better.

CLIVE DAVIS



Richard Cork

illy

A

Look, Death, get a life

NEW MOVIES: James Christopher sees Brad Pitt make the Grim Reaper sexy (if you're a teenage girl) in *Meet Joe Black*

There is a puzzle in Meet Joe Black that troubles Anthony Hopkins's media tycoon for three swollen hours of expensive, glossy melodrama. About to drop dead of a heart attack, Hopkins's billionaire Bill Parrish is granted a supernatural reprieve if he will instruct Death, also known as Joe Black, on the joys of life. Death, in short, wants a vacation. "Why me? Why now?" asks Parrish, reasonably spooked when he discovers that Death has borrowed the body of Brad Pitt. "Call it boredom," says Black, metaphorically shrugging his shoulders and inspecting his fingernails.

One sympathises with the grim one. After an infinity spent hobbling around in a shabby cloak, clutching a scythe and being reviled for his indiscriminate slaughter of humanity, Death wants to find out what this fuss called being alive is all about. He might be naive but he has an impeccable taste in bodies. Forget the flabby Hell's Angel with Grateful Dead tattoos, let's have that golden-haired lawyer conveniently flattened like a ragdoll in a car accident. It's a shocking scene that injects a dose of black humour into the otherwise life-affirming piece of whimsy that director Martin Brest makes from the original 1934 film, *Death Takes a Holiday*.

Fun for Black is hell for Parrish. Sworn to keep Black's true identity a secret to avoid being whisked away like Faust, Parrish has to dream up excuses as to why this immaculately polite social incompetent who guzzles biscuits and peanut butter is following him around like a poodle.

The subsequent joy of Brest's film is seeing the omnipotent Joe Black flapping around like a fish out of water and discovering the confusion of falling in love with Parrish's scrumptious daughter, Susan (Claire Forlani). Typically, it's Forlani's sexy medic, a far prettier version of the young Barbra Streisand, who does all the running — a marathon rather than a sprint. Death, it transpires, is a shy, fumbling virgin who doesn't know how his lips, let alone his flies, work. But what a battle of the close-ups: she all dewy eyes and confused, animated eyebrows; he glazed as a corpse. Necrophilia has never looked more one-sided.

Nor, unfortunately, has a film. The double-act between Hopkins and Pitt is decidedly lopsided. While Pitt is perfectly in tune with his comic creation, Hopkins's media baron lends the film a gravitas it simply does not deserve. He is brilliant delivering crisp lines with that world-weary, melancholy charm. And he is lavishly indulged. You can almost feel the cameras bowing and scraping as Parrish rumbles into fabulously appointed rooms to make heartfelt speeches to his daughters over dinner, or to fight the takeover bid that threatens to pull his empire apart.

But you could scupper ships in the pauses between him and Black. They are not only entities from two different dimensions, but two completely different films. Brest spends far too long trying to give both characters unwarranted credibility, when the film's soul already belongs to Pitt's Black. He is, after all, the most unlikely, nay unbelievable, Death one can hope to meet. But despite his vacant sounding voice, his zombie mannerisms and his quirky economy with the truth, this is the kind of romantic figure unbalanced schoolgirls are dying to meet.

Meet Joe Black
Empire, 12, 181 mins
Brad Pitt, aka Death, discovers sex on holiday

The Opposite of Sex
Warner Village West End 18, 100 mins
Caustic satire concerning political correctness

Buttoners
ICA, 102 mins
Kinky Czech comedy that squeezes humour from the upholstery

Dobermann
Metro 18, 103 mins
Nihilistic splatter-movie for the unreconstructed

Sour Grapes
Virgin Trocadero, 15, 92 mins
Frothy sitcom dressed up as a movie

The puzzle confusing Christina Ricci's 16-year-old sociopath in **The Opposite of Sex** is exactly that: what is the opposite of sex? That she regurgitates a homily about loving relationships on something resembling a postcard at the end of the film should not detract from Don Roos's blistering satire on political correctness. But it does, because it does not fit.

Ricci's Dedee is a wonderfully anarchic invention: all puppy fat, cleavage and acid commentary. She makes Alicia Silverstone in *Clueless* sound like a papal envoy. Fleeing her ghastly trailerpark home, she throws herself on the mercies of her gay half-brother, Bill (Martin Donovan), a 35-year-old English teacher with a soft heart and a private income. Dedee is not exactly enamoured of homosexuals but that doesn't stop her seducing Bill's beefcake boyfriend Matt (Ivan Sergei), getting pregnant and high-tailing it to Los Angeles with $10,000 of Bill's money.

The mischievous novelty of Don Roos's film is Dedee's caustic voice-over in a film stitched entirely out of her flashbacks. As the hapless Bill and his spinster neighbour, Lucia, chase Dedee and Matt across America, Dedee mercilessly shreds their motives and sexless lives from the unreliable armchair of hindsight. It's Thackeray for the MTV generation.

As the money runs out and the wheels come off Dedee's quest to find something more lasting than sex, control of the film swings in Lucia and Bill's favour. It is a clever piece of manipulation by director Roos. But he loses Ricci's delicious sting and the plot starts feeling suspiciously soapy. Lisa Kudrow's fabulously repressed Lucia keeps it simmering with a mixture of semi-hysterical outrage — "My God, she (Dedee) is the human tabloid" — and lacerating self-pity at her own inability to find a man. She is abetted by several priceless cameos from the likes of Lyle Lovett as a geeky, Lucia-infatuated sheriff, and Johnny Galecki as a mincing sleazeball. But the glib platitudes with which Dedee finally wraps up her awfully big adventure leave a disappointing aftertaste.

The title of Petr Zelenka's award-winning Czech film, **Buttoners**, is derived from a most peculiar fetish. With a pair of false dentures clamped between his thighs, a distinguished-looking gentleman gets his thrills by secretly prising the buttons off upholstered seats with a few expert shifts of his buttocks. *"Nothing else excites him,"* says his wife apologetically to a dinner party host whose antique sofa her husband has just devastated.

It never becomes clear what the thrill actually is, but this is entirely typical of the motley characters who people Zelenka's intriguing film. Here six short stories are linked by a daisy chain of coincidences. The first, a sepia-tinted sequence, takes place in the tense cockpit of the *Enola Gay* just before the atom bomb is dropped on Hiroshima. The others unfold exactly 50 years later in Prague, showing how urban life is an absurd *La Ronde* of cause and effect inspired by ambition, obsession, perversion, guilt and jealousy.

A taxi driver picks up two lovers who indulge their illicit passion at high speed on the back seat. An unemployed railway guard escapes his nagging wife to lie under passing trains and spit with astonishing accuracy at the numberplates. A hygiene-obsessed psychoanalyst causes a car accident while spraying his mouth. Linked by nothing more substantial than a phone call, a taxi ride or, in the *Enola Gay's* case, a ghost, these tales of chance make a mockery of a modern world which prides itself on rationality, efficiency and the ability to launch rockets carrying sperm into outer space. For a low-budget satire this is impressive stuff, not least because of the sheer amount of comedy Zelenka squeezes from his elusively big themes.

Life is blissfully uncomplicated in Jan Kounen's splatter-movie, **Dobermann**. From the moment a computer graphic of a gun-toting man with a snarling dog's head urinates on the credits, you know you can pack your brains in your boots. Here, Rufus Sewell lookalike Vincent Cassel leads a gang of ultra-violent Mad Max types on a series of bank heists armed with enough rocket launchers, mammoth handguns and exploding bullets to take out the French National Guard.

Against him stands Tcheky Karyo's Gestapo cop who, when he's not pulping innocent teenagers in police cells, is snorting amphetamines and stubbing his cigar out on somebody's forehead. One step on from a comic and a step away from an arcade game, *Dobermann* is fabulously clichéd, grossly amusing and awesomely un-PC. The only significant female role is a gun-licking, mute, gypsy model (Monica Bellucci) who gets sexually turned on by the gratuity of it all. You would have thought that this grown-up, stylish-looking cast had better things to do. But you can't help but admire the comic ingenuity with which various goons are dispatched, shot in the groin, etc.

In his first feature, Larry David, co-creator of the sitcom *Seinfeld*, tries to pass off his comedy **Sour Grapes** as a film. He fools no one. An insufferable jock, Richie (Craig Bierko), borrows a couple of quarters from his brain-surgeon cousin Evan (Steven Weber) and promptly wins a $436,000 jackpot on a fruit machine in Atlantic City. He refuses to divide the spoils, the cousins fall out, their families fall out, and a ludicrous game of brinkmanship ends with Evan accidentally cutting the testicles off a famous TV star, while Richie tries to bump off his doting mother.

Here things finally get amusing. But without the canned laughter this glorified sitcom sounds hollow for awfully long stretches.



Brad Pitt and Anthony Hopkins join the fold in *Meet Joe Black*, Martin Brest's patchy remake of the 1934 classic *Death Takes a Holiday*

Can the Jacqueline du Pré film improve on previous efforts to portray music on screen? **Geoff Brown** reports

What colour is C sharp minor?

Early on in the tempestuous melodrama of *Hilary and Jackie*, the new film about *Jacqueline du* Pré, our young heroine performs at a music competition. This is a key moment in the story's development, though our response may be blunted by what the camera gets up to. As she plays, it spins around du Pré and her cello, making her waltz and making us giddy.

Cameras always do this whenever a director, in this case Anand Tucker, gets in sight of a musician playing a solo instrument. Long ago the *conjuring* up of romantic ardour might have been the aim, but now all we see is a tiresome cliché.

Tucker's film then moves on, sometimes to good effect, sometimes to bad, to explore another stock movie ingredient: the artist as a suffering, if not insufferable, genius. Remember *Gary Oldman's* boorish Beethoven, raging through Bernard Rose's *Immortal Beloved*? Or Tom Hulce's Mozart, reimagined as an American brat in the film of *Amadeus*? And dare I mention the name of Ken Russell, a man who loves music through and through, but *does* hateful things to prove it?

But this whirling camera in *Hilary and Jackie* highlights one of the many practical problems of marrying images to music, especially classical. The camera must do *something when music* rather than dramatic narrative fills the screen. Do you try to complement the music's supposed mood with cloudscapes, skyscrapers, cute cartoons of dancing hippopotamuses, Roger Daltrey acting barmy (as in Russell's *Lisztomania*), or colliding abstract spheres and spirals? How, in short, do you visualise music?

> 'How dreadful to associate Beethoven with Disney'

This is a question that has teased minds ever since people started to think about the relationships between the senses. The link between the eye and ear starts with the very notation of music, its patterns of symbols and staves, black notes, white notes, rectangles, hairpins, half-circles with dots. No wonder some contemporary scores have been exhibited in art galleries.

Colour-coding individual sounds has also exercised minds. "Colour organs" have been built, the first perhaps in 1734, projecting different lights as different keys were struck. Scriabin put one into his musical poem *Prometheus*. Later this century, Messiaen tussled with the colour of music and time in numerous works, including *Chronochromie*, to be performed at the Barbican on Friday during the BBC's Messiaen weekend. And once you struggle to describe music in words, *as poet* or *critic*, you constantly test the viability of visual metaphors. An extreme was reached in the 19th century by the German writer and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann, who dressed one of his characters in "a coat the colour of C sharp minor with an E major coloured collar". I wonder if John Lewis has one.

Hoffmann, of course, was being deliberately perverse. But once cinema was up and running, the way was open for such fancies of synaesthesia to be tested in celluloid. The Germans in the 1920s and 1930s were particularly curious about finding visual correlatives to music, though the abstract work of a film-maker like Oskar Fischinger makes you realise the perils of the exercise. On the screen, you get surging spheres, dancing lines, spiralling circles and *bobbing rectangles: delightful* in their way, but tied to over-familiar classical selections like Brahms's Hungarian dances, hideously recorded, or chunks of a Brandenburg Concerto. Now the strait-laced soundtracks hold the images back, which is not the case with the pieces by Fischinger and others cut to popular music and jazz improvisations.

A film-maker really gets tested if the images used to match the music are determinedly representational. The key work here is Disney's *Fantasia*, first released in 1940. The unseen Philadelphia Orchestra *is conducted by* Leopold Stokowski, who appears between sequences alone on the podium, conducting nothing but a sunset glow. Fischinger himself worked at a distance on the one purely abstract section, matched to Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. But the bulk of the images consist of the Disney artists' freakish imaginings: frolicsome centaurs, *darting* Cupids with heart-shaped bottoms, fish with come-hither eyes.

Here we enter dangerously subjective territory, though it is one familiar from childhood. Children are traditionally led towards classical music through descriptive pieces such as Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*. In one way it makes sense. But music is so much more than images depicted in sound; music is structure, volume, density, rhythm, melody, counterpoint, harmony, dissonance, and any *"meaning" it contains* is locked into its formal constituents. How dreadful to go through life always associating Beethoven with Disney's kitsch or Oldman's scowl.

Yet we had better get used to the dangers and joys of intermingling music and image. Listen to the spirit of the age. It is not the age for absolute music, constructed in laboratories with graph paper, slide rules and 12-note rows. The contemporary music in fashion today bristles with extra-musical associations, from Michael Daugherty's hip homages to American popular culture to *Messiaen's wondrous* aviary. Over the past 30 years the formal properties of cinema have fed more and more into serious compositional techniques: you get musical close-ups, *flashbacks, or an anarchic* collage resembling a Warner Bros cartoon. The next 30 years will doubtless see sound and image fusing even more, helped by developments in digital technology. Along the way, I just hope someone finds a different way to film a young girl playing the cello.

● Hilary and Jackie *opens in London on Jan 22 and the rest of the country on Feb 12*



Gary Oldman's Beethoven re-enacts the tiresome movie cliché of the artist as suffering genius in Immortal Beloved

In the heat of the moment

DANCE

Romeo and Juliet
Festival Hall

There can be few greater delights in a dancegoer's life than seeing Sylvie Guillem and Jonathan Cope let loose in the heat of Kenneth MacMillan's choreography. They have developed such an extraordinary rapport and trust as stage partners that they can totally immerse *themselves in the euphoric* — and fatal — passion of MacMillan's young lovers. Their duets, masterpieces of danced desire, sizzle at the heart of this ballet and the story comes alive when they are in each other's arms.

The contrast between public duty and private happiness, embodied so tragically in Juliet, is one of the key themes of MacMillan's 1965 work, now revived by *the Royal Ballet* as part of its winter season. And one of the strengths of the Cope-Guillem reading is the way they are driven to compromise their positions in the full glare *of family and friends*. They pursue their stolen moments with a foolhardy gusto, and when they are alone they dance as if there is no tomorrow.

All of this takes place in Act I, crammed with the ballet's finest drama and its best choreography. This is where Guillem astonishes us with the ease and eloquence of her *bountiful technique. She gives* herself over to MacMillan's lucid writing, sailing through the early duets on a cloud of delicious expectation.

Cope is the spark who ignites Guillem's flame, and from the first moment he sets eyes on her in the crowded ballroom *you know he is doomed* to follow this love wherever it will take him. He must have danced this role dozens of times, yet he still manages to give his Romeo a fresh amorous impetus. In the balcony scene the sheer pleasure of dancing with Guillem was written all over his body.

William Trevitt, in his last role with the Royal Ballet (he being one of the five male dancers *who have jumped ship* mid-season), is a fine Mercutio, full of swagger and laughter, and — no mean feat this — making us believe in every minute of poor Mercutio's protracted *death* scene. Trevitt, Cope and Shi-Ning Liu's Benvolio (a frisky performance) formed an enjoyably blokeish alliance, while Christopher Saunders's remarkable Tybalt *was their suitably vile* opponent.

Nicholas Georgiadis, the ballet's original designer, has provided new sets tailored to fit the Festival Hall's problematic *stage. The look is dark* and claustrophobic, as if all Verona is oppressed by the gloom of the feuding Capulets and Montagues.

DEBRA CRAINE

■ LISTINGS
Corin Redgrave's Wilde

ARTS

■ CLASSICAL CDS
Poulenc centenary discs

Maroon signals distress

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

ANDRAS SCHIFF: Returns only for this recital where the virtuoso Hungarian pianist displays his refined yet vigorous musicianship. The all-Schumann programme features Arabeske in C, Davidsbündlertänze, Blumenstück in D flat and Etudes symphoniques.
Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm.

VASSA: Sheila Hancock heads a terrific cast, playing the family matriarch in Gorky's strong drama. Howard Davies directs Peter Gill's new version for the Almeida season.
Albery (0171-369 1730). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm.

SONG RECITAL: The bass baritone Jonathan Veira takes a break from his traditional operatic repertoire to sing a selection of songs by John Jeffrys, Finzi and Shelley Katz who also accompanies on the piano.
St John's (0171-222 1061). Tonight. 7.30pm.

THE GLORY OF LIVING: British debut for Alabama-born Rebecca Gilman's drama of excitement and danger in the trailer parks. Kathryn Hunter directs.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000). Previews from tonight, 8pm.

LORD OF THE FLIES: William Golding's vivid tale of terror and death on paradise island, adapted by Nigel Williams and directed by Marcus Romer for Pilot Theatre Co.
Lyric (0181-741 8701). Previews from tonight, 7.30pm.


Sheila Hancock stars in *Vassa* at the Albery

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: Corin Redgrave performs Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis*, his passionate letter from Reading Gaol. In repertoire with Just, Not Fair. (See review, page 37.)
Birmingham Rep (0121-236 6771). Opens tonight, 7.45pm.

BRISTOL: The distinguished Danish conductor Michael Schønwandt replaces the indisposed Herbert Blomstedt in the evening's concert by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. A slightly changed programme now comprises *Mendelssohn's Fingal's Cave* Overture, Schubert's Third Symphony and Brahms's First Piano Concerto played on an original 1875 Bösendorfer by Alexei Lubimov.
Colston Hall (0117 9223682). Tonight, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ House full, returns only ◩ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **I WEEP AT MY PIANO:** Told By An Idiot regulars Hayley Carmichael, Richard Clews and Stephen Harper play Lorca, Dali and Bunuel in a hallucinatory evocation of Lorca's last hours. Paul Hunter directs.
BAC (0171-223 2223)

□ **PERFECT DAYS:** Siobhan Redmond's award-winning performance as the thirtysomething celebrity hairdresser longing for a baby. John Tiffany directs Liz Lochhead's poignant comedy.
Hampstead (0171-722 9301)

THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE: Dramatised reconstruction of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. Timed to coincide with this month's publication of the findings. Profoundly relevant theatre. (See review, page 37)
Tricycle Theatre (0171-328 1000)

□ **KRAPP'S LAST TAPE:** Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient sensualist replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed Breath — total playing time: 35 seconds.
Arts Theatre (0171-836 3334).

◩ **THE MEMORY OF WATER:** Alison Steadman, Samantha Bond and Julia Sawalha star in Shelagh Stephenson's acclaimed drama of family memories.
Vaudeville (0171-836 9987).

□ **CHICAGO:** Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and fickle fame.
Adelphi (0171-344 0055).

□ **JESUS MY BOY:** Tom Conti in John Dowie's fitfully amusing comedy giving Joseph's side of the story.
Apollo (0171-494 5070).

◩ **PETER PAN:** Justin Salinger plays the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook, in return of Fiona Laird's enjoyable production.
Olivier (0171-452 3000).

□ ***FACES OF THE NIGHT:*** *Or* Everybody Gets The Demons They Deserve. Figurentheater Tübingen creates an obituary for Max Jacob, painter, poet and Gestapo victim, performed by puppeteer Frank Soehnle and 13 rubber devils.
ICA (071-930 3647). Tonight-Sat, 8pm

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

LITTLE VOICE *(15): Mark Herman's* wonderful version of Jim Cartwright's stage hit. Jane Horrocks sings glorious covers of torch song divas. Michael Caine, Ewan McGregor, Brenda Blethyn and Jim Broadbent sleaze around in the foreground.

THE SIEGE (15): Denzel Washington, Annette Bening, and Bruce Willis trip over each others' bootlaces as they try to defuse an Arab terrorist offensive in Manhattan. Chillingly real, *beautifully acted. Director Edward* Zwick fingers a real raw nerve.

PSYCHO (15): Hopeless remake of Hitchcock's original. Gus Van Sant re-shoots this classic fear movie in colour, misses the ironies and misplaces the shuddering suspense. With Vince Vaughn and Anne Heche.

π (Pi) (15): Low-budget sci-fi adventure by David Aronofsky that charts the madness of a genius mathematician *haunted by nightmares and* money-mad investors. Sean Gullette is the mesmerising lead.

ANGEL DUST (ICA): Cool Japanese melodrama about a psychic detective who has to nail her former lover and mentor for killings on the Tokyo tube. Sogo Ishii directs.

TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT (PG): A reassuringly scratchy reprint of Howard Hawks's 1944 classic in which Lauren Bacall shoots fish in a barrel and Humphrey Bogart falls madly in love.

CURRENT

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indigestible onslaught. With Stephen McCole, Ewen Bremner and Kevin McKidd

SITCOM *(18): A French bourgeois* family unbuttons itself. Mildly diverting lampoon, excellently acted ensemble cast. Director, Francois Ozon.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG). Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceable race who have found the elixir of youth. Lightly likeable. Director, Jonathan Frakes

ENEMY OF THE STATE (15): Will Smith's lawyer tumbles upon a political conspiracy. Exciting, fast-paced thriller, with Gene Hackman and Jon Voight.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (15). Robin Williams wades through the afterlife trying to find his loved ones. Technically dazzling, but sabotaged by *a woolly script.* With Annabella Sciorra, Cuba Gooding Jr, Max Von Sydow. Director, Vincent Ward.

NEW ON VIDEO

■ **LOST IN SPACE**
Entertainment, PG, 1998
A CAMPY, low-budget TV series of the 1960s balloons into another effects-laden Hollywood blockbuster. William Hurt and Mimi Rogers head the Space Family Robinson, whose trip to Jupiter is sabotaged, leaving them prey to a drifting ship full of hungry spiders, a space monkey called Blawp, and the very suspicious Dr Zachary Smith (another villainous role for Gary Oldman). Under the direction of Stephen Hopkins, effects, sets and costumes offer plenty for the eyes, but the screenplay is lame. Available to rent.

■ **THE BITTER TEA OF GENERAL YEN**
Cinema Club, PG, 1933
FRANK CAPRA may have made his name with his optimistic fables of the late 1930s and beyond, but in his earlier days he directed much more varied fare, including this gorgeously photographed, astonishing exercise in sensuous, slinky melodrama. Barbra Stanwyck stars as the missionary who falls for a Chinese war lord. Other early Capra films newly available include *American Madness* (1932), a rip-roaring drama with Walter Huston as a bank president besieged by the Depression, and the comedy *Platinum Blonde*, with Jean Harlow.

■ **DAY OF WRATH**
BFI Films, PG, 1943
THE Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer could not be less fashionable, but his austerely sculpted images, rigorous close-ups and mix of psychology and spirituality have all helped to *shape modern cinema. This is a typically* stark film about witchcraft, set in a 17th-century landscape of spare grey chambers and severe black costumes, where there is no place for characters or spectators to hide. A repressive priest forces a confession of witchcraft out of an old peasant woman, whose curse brings down calamity on himself and his young wife. *Gloomy, but great.*


Matt Le Blanc (second from right) and Gary Oldman (far right) encounter life, but not as we know it, of course, in the big-budget *Lost in Space*

■ **MOUCHETTE**
Nouveaux Pictures, 15, 1966
FEW directors can do more with less than the great French film-maker Robert Bresson. His style goes beyond simplicity: with a few shots of hands at work or faces in repose, he can reach into his characters' soul. Especially in this riveting adaptation of Georges Bernanos's novel about the forlorn life of a peasant schoolgirl in a hostile world. The cast, as usual, is non-professional; there is little music, apart from a few extracts from Monteverdi. Not a barrel of laughs, but the film's humanity and capacity to move brings its own huge rewards.

■ **A THOUSAND ACRES**
PolyGram, 15, 1997
BEWARE the Hollywood film that takes itself too seriously. Like this one: a worthy slog through the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of Jane Smiley that lifts the themes of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and transports them to the American Midwest. The cast is powerful: Jessica Lange, Michelle Pfeiffer and Jennifer Jason Leigh play the daughters of crusty patriarch Jason Robards, who sows the seeds of family destruction when he divides up his thousand-acre farm among them. The director is Jocelyn Moorehouse, still to top her first film, *Proof*. A rental release.

GEOFF BROWN

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Poulenc parties on; Czech opera by a Czech soprano; and a piano-playing politician

VOCAL

■ **POULENC**
Mélodies
Le Roux/Cachemaille/Rogé
Decca 460 326-2 ★ ★ ★ *£30.99*
POULENC'S centenary is celebrated on disc by a delicious new two-CD set of his songs which dips into the diary of his entire life through his settings of the poetry of Eluard, Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Lorca and Cocteau.

François le Roux, the baritone who dominates the first disc of this pair, gives a passionate performance of the Eluard cycle, *Tel jour, telle nuit*, and has the measure of *Le Travail du peintre*, Poulenc's little gallery of artist portraits. The more poised and polished baritone of Gilles Cachemaille is ideally suited to the long lines of Poulenc's farewell to song in *Nuage*; yet he can bluster away with the best of them in the bucolic *Chansons villageois*. The *Huit chansons polonaises*, Poulenc's "harmonisations" of songs of farewell written at the time of the Polish Insurrection of 1831, are given poignant performances by Urszula Kryger.





Poulenc (left) is celebrated in two CDs of his songs and three CDs of his piano music, interpreted by Rogé (right)

Decca has also issued a three-disc boxed set of Poulenc's *Complete Music for Solo Piano* (Decca 460 598-2) played by Pascal Rogé, who accompanies the songs with such understanding and wit.

HILARY FINCH

OPERA

■ **EVA URBANOVÁ**
Erato 3984-23414-2 ★ ★
£15.99
THE Czech soprano Eva Urbanová first caught the ear at the end of last year in Decca's outstanding recording of *Rusalka*. There she sang the icy princess to Renée Fleming's water nymph. In Dvorák's fairytale opera princesses usually lose out to pond dwellers, especially when the latter is in the hands of Ms Fleming. But Urbanova is clearly not a lady to sit in the shadows.

In Erato's solo disc, taken from a Prague concert a year ago and devoted entirely to Czech opera, Urbanová shows that she too can address the silver moon in Rusalka's invocation.

She is prepared to take heavier roles too. The Kostelnicka's Act II aria from Janácek's *Jenufa* brims with uninhibited passion. And she has the soft touch with the lullaby from Smetana's *The Kiss*.

The second half of the recital goes to another Smetana opera, *Libuse*, a patriotic piece generally disentombed for state occasions, but not much heard outside his homeland. It is a strident affair, but Urbanová fights gutsily against all the brass of the Prague Symphony conducted by Ondrej Lenárd.

Urbanová sounds a bit tired by the time she reaches the last of Libuse's six prophecies. Who wouldn't be? She must beware of pushing herself too hard and too far.

JOHN HIGGINS

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

ORCHESTRAL

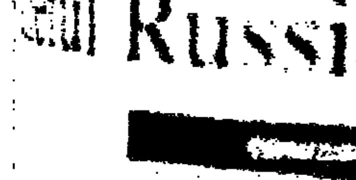
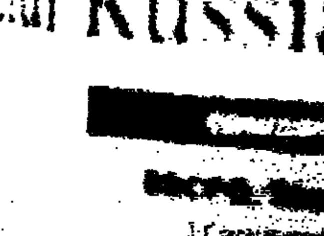
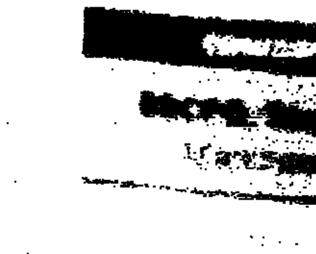
■ **PADEREWSKI**
Symphony in B Minor (Polonia)
BBC Scottish SO/ Maksymiuk
Hyperion CDA67056 ★ ★
£14.99
PRIME ministers occasionally play the piano, but it is not often that concert pianists become Prime Minister. Ignacy Jan Paderewski, not content with being lionised as a virtuoso of the highest order, became the first Prime Minister of newly independent Poland in 1919. He was also a composer, mostly of works for the piano. His Piano Concerto in A minor has been recorded several times, but there is no recording of his *Symphony* in B minor (*Polonia*) currently in the catalogue, and this new Hyperion release is actually the first uncut version to be issued outside Poland.

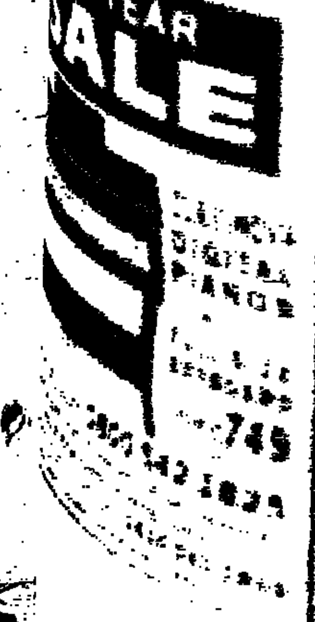
Liszt and Tchaikovsky are the obvious models, the former in its all-encompassing structural layout (rather like a symphonic poem), the latter in the brooding, sometimes lachrymose mood and orchestral colouring.

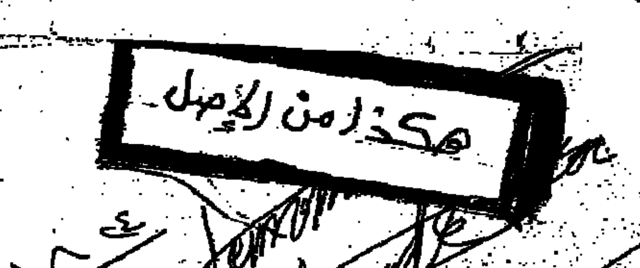
Jerzy Maksymiuk's account with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra reveals it as a thickly textured, even blowsy score (three sarrusophones add to the impression), but utterly original and well worth investigation.

BARRY MILLINGTON

★ *Worth hearing*
★ ★ *Worth considering*
★ ★ ★ *Worth buying*



■ **THEATRE**
Real-life tragedy on stage

ARTS

■ **TOMORROW**
Record company wars

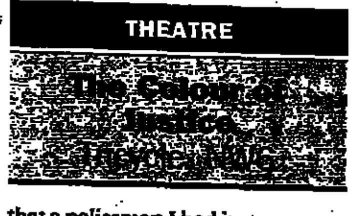
THEATRE: In London and Birmingham two high-profile miscarriages of justice are relived on stage in a pair of docudramas

Questions that need to be asked

At the end of the Tricycle's re-creation of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, Michael Culver, who plays the chairman, Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, asks those in his courtroom to observe a minute's silence in tribute to the murdered boy and the courage of his parents in pursuing their crusade for justice. On the first night, it wasn't just the actors who stood quietly for what seemed far longer than 60 seconds, but the reviewers, the paying punters and Stephen's father and friends. It was a curious as well as a moving episode: a recognition that, for once, we were in a theatre to ponder real-life evidence that vitally concerned the moral health of us all.

Docudrama is a worrying genre, and the Lawrence inquiry is open to misuse as a subject, especially as Macpherson prepares to publish and the papers hot up with rumours of his findings. As I drove from Kilburn, I heard on the radio

THEATRE



that a policeman I had just seen convincingly portrayed in *Colour of Justice* was to face charges of incompetence. When 11,000 pages of evidence are reduced to 100, how can you be sure the truth is unslanted and you yourself are unmanipulated? There were certainly moments in the Tricycle's similar staging of the Scott inquiry, *Half the Picture*, when I felt it would be fairer to await the report itself.

But Richard Norton-Taylor won my trust for his editing of Lawrence. Though I was one of the 99.99 per cent of the population who did not attend it, I followed the proceedings, and know he has excluded evidence that would undermine the Met's claims to integrity and competence still further than the force itself has managed to do. Why did the police fail earlier to arrest the white thugs they had every reason to suspect of the black student's killing? Such questions persistently arise in *The Colour of Justice*, and are answered with evasions and quibbles by junior officers and with admissions of failure and apologies by their seniors; but a genuinely combative, cop-baiting dramatist might have gone a lot further.

As it is, there is much to trouble us citizens. Why was Stephen's bleeding not stemmed as he lay dying in Eltham back in 1993? Did the police really think this decent young man was a burglar who had been in a fight? Why was the initial hunt for his killers a desultory matter of roaming the local streets with torches that didn't work? Did one of the suspects' father, a drug baron, nobble the police inquiry? Why was officer XXX, who stands accused of conniving with this gentleman, asked to look after a key black witness when the Lawrences launched their abortive prosecution of the alleged killers? Is there institutionalised racism in the Met?

Nicolas Kent's production, packed as it is with matter-of-fact acting-that-isn't-acting, has so many unpretentiously telling moments that it seems absurd to pick out one. Why, then, do I recall Tim Woodward as the churchgoer who crossed the road to help the dying Stephen and whose wife repeated "you are loved" as she cradled him? Not just because such Samaritanism is intensely moving, but because even he says he suspected the boy was a mugger trying to trick him. As Macpherson will surely show, Britain has far to go before it can claim to be an equal society.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



DONALD COOPER

Doreen and Neville Lawrence (Yvonne Pascal and Tyrone De Rizzio) are the distraught parents in Richard Norton-Taylor's re-creation of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry

In London the Tricycle Theatre is telling the story of a murder for which nobody has been found guilty in a court of law because the police omitted to proceed in the manner a democracy expects. In Birmingham the Rep's Studio Theatre is raising the memory of the Carl Bridgewater murder for which, by contrast, four men were imprisoned for 18 years until the Court of Appeal decided their convictions were "unsafe and unsatisfactory". They have not been declared innocent, however, and last month the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to prosecute the eight detectives who helped to put them away.

Meanwhile, in the Stephen Lawrence case, several senior officers whose conduct is open to criticism have conveniently retired. So they cannot be charged. How supportive the law is of its own.

Joys of freedom



Just, Not Fair is performed by Malcolm Tierney from a script by Jim Robinson, one of the Bridgewater Four, and tells something of his life before, after and during his time inside. Think back to the year before the Falklands war: does it all seem ancient history today? That's the length of time Robinson, and Vincent and Michael Hickey were locked away. The fourth man, Pat Molloy, died in jail.

Tierney, grey-haired, quietly speaking, sits for the most part on a park bench beneath winter trees. A tree is what he first mentions, smiling, as if self-conscious at revealing something so privately important. "Just to be under a tree," he confides to us. "Just to feel the bark, see how the roots come out of the earth." And in the play's closing moments, a little over an hour later, he speaks of the wonder of being free to lock the doors of his car around him, having not touched a door handle for 18 years.

He speaks with persuasive candour of his life before young Bridgewater was killed, mining his teenage days as a clown in New South Wales for moments of comedy. He talks a little of his 17-day hunger strike, and says more about the 81 days on the roof at Gartree Prison after Kenneth Clarke rejected a petition for an appeal. But mostly his subject is the difficulty of persuading British people that injustice, police perjury and sadism in prisons could occur in their own country. Perhaps we do know this today, having grown infinitely more cynical of authority these past 18 years.

Greatly aided by Jessica Dromgoole's direction as his account moves between irony and stark revelation, Robinson's story is also a testament of dignified survival. Inevitably some of its arguments for reform recall Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis*, and to help us to compare the two this famous text will from today be performed in repertory with Robinson's, Corin Redgrave playing the man in Reading Gaol. An imaginative and inspiring venture.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Curious pyjama games

I think that it is safe to say, without causing offence, that *A Special Offer* contains some of the worst acting seen on the London stage for a long time. At the start of the show a pyjama-clad couple enter awkwardly into a brochure-perfect bedroom, don a pair of wigs and proceed to trundle half-heartedly through a series of anodyne, sub-sitcom relationship tableaux.

This is all horribly disturbing until one twigs that the painful gurning and hammy delivery are not all they appear to be. These people aren't just incidentally sub-sitcom: they are genuinely on the lowest possible rung of the performance ladder, principally because their bedroom is not simply show-home perfect, it is actually still in the Sharps Bedroom showroom.

What is delivered in their performance is a monstrous amalgam of pasteurised afternoon soap operas, shopping channel infomercials

MIME FESTIVAL

A Special Offer
Young Vic

and the imaginary lifestyle of the airbrushed families in a mail-order catalogue.

So far, so good; we are watching a piece of fantastical instore entertainment. But the illusion of voyeurism is undermined by Lisa Gornick's splendidly funny demonstration of exactly the kind of embarrassing daftness that real people do indulge in in the privacy of their own homes, which in her case apparently involves positioning plastic fruit in her underpants, then receiving Clintonian pleasures from a blonde wig. The shopfloor actors' real lives increasingly infringe on their performances as true protestations of love destroy their chocolate-box romance.

Yet even this apparent truth is undermined by the presence of Audrey the floor manager, whose degree of control over their performance is difficult to gauge; are they a figment of her romantic imagination? Inanimate mannequins? Performing slaves?

As is often the case with devised performances, there is much material here that feels too incidental in its inclusion to make the show entirely satisfactory. "Why," asks the programme, "is the sales assistant singing opera?" to which of course the answer is a) because it's funny and b) because she is played by Rebecca Gale who happens to be an opera singer.

Much of the scripting also still feels like an improvisation. While there is both food for thought here and some superbly comic moments, the exploration of the sinister within the bland has been done before and with greater success.

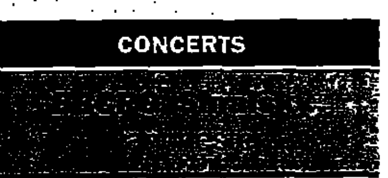
HETTIE JUDAH

Tuneful Russians revisited

The Manchester audience cannot, it seems, hear too much Russian music. In spite of the BBC Philharmonic's recent overemphasis on that area of the repertoire, they still keep coming back for more — secure in the knowledge, no doubt, that with Vassily Sinaisky conducting there will be nothing half-hearted in the interpretation and nothing unidiomatic in the playing. Attendance at the Bridgewater Hall on this occasion was all the more impressive for the fact that at the head of the programme, alongside a Prokofiev concerto and a Rachmaninov symphony, there was a major work by Alfred Schnittke.

Or, perhaps it would not be entirely unfair to say, there was a travesty of a major work by Alfred Schnittke. The composer has only himself to blame for his *In Memoriam* — even though it was his great friend and ally Gennadi Rozhdestvensky who talked him into it — but this orchestral arrangement of his Piano Quintet is

CONCERTS



nowhere near as convincing as the original. Written in memory of his mother, the Piano Quintet is an essentially intimate work that, far from being intensified in its expressive effect by the extra colouring available from the orchestra (and, unfortunately, the organ), sounds contrived on the larger scale. It is true that contrivance is not alien to Schnittke's thinking but if *In Memoriam* had been conceived for orchestra in the first place the material would have been quite different. So, although it was a timely tribute to the late composer, it was also a rather sadder one than intended.

The immediate consolation was the extraordinary performance of Pekka Kuusisto in Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto. Not yet 23 (and looking even younger), he has a wonderfully accomplished technique, an apparently fearless presence and a rare taste in matters of phrasing and colouring. Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto, which is the more youthful work, might have suited him better than the Second, which requires more in the way of classical decorum, but it was an engaging performance even so.

As for Rachmaninov's Third Symphony, it takes even more than a fully committed Sinaisky and a well prepared and generously indulgent BBC Philharmonic to demonstrate that it is more than a highly professional artifice. But you can do a lot with a few good tunes and, beginning with the lovely cello inspiration in the first movement, they certainly made the most of them.

GERALD LARNER

Prizewinners in good voice

Exmoor Singers
St John's, Smith Sq

In the week of the composer's centenary, Saturday night's Poulenc celebration by the Exmoor Singers, the Mixed Voice Choir of the Year in the recent Sainsbury's Competition, was a timely event. Poulenc is something of a gift to choirs of above-average ability: his harmonies are always grateful and there is just enough textural variety to hold the attention. The idiom is, on the other hand, conservative in the extreme.

The Exmoor Singers under their music director James Jarvis gave four works of the French composer, emerging with much credit. The *Sept Chansons* exemplified the trials in store: exposed chording, unprepared high notes, sustained quiet passages giving way to animated outbursts. There were blemishes here, as elsewhere, but it would be ungenerous to dwell on them when there was so much to be impressed by.

Figure humaine, often considered Poulenc's masterpiece in the genre, is a powerful response to the Nazi occupation of Paris. The choir struck the right chord of urgency with some spirited highlighting of key words in *Riant du ciel et des planètes* and a progressive incitement to liberty in the last number that reached an exultant, if strident, climax.

Poulenc's *Quatre motets pour un temps de pénitence* found the singers fresh after the interval, but by the final item, the Mass in G Major, tiredness was beginning to take its toll. The soprano solo in the Agnus Dei was well taken by Ruth Beckmann.

Schoenberg's moving setting of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer's poem *Friede auf Erden* (Peace on Earth) provided, in its broadly arching phrases, a welcome antidote to Poulenc's short-windedness. It was good, too, to hear Webern's *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen*, its tonality on the verge of dissolution posing challenges for an unaccompanied choir (met creditably here as throughout).

BARRY MILLINGTON

Carnival of Venice

English Concert
Wigmore Hall

Venetian scarlet and gold glowed centre-stage at the Wigmore Hall on Tuesday. Trevor Pinnock's harpsichord was a vibrant emblem of the music of Vivaldi and Marcello which rang out of an evening focussing on *L'estro armonico*, the set of concertos for solo violins Vivaldi wrote for the young orphaned musicians of the Ospedale della Pieta in Venice in the early 18th century.

The music-making, too, was opulent. The English Concert, of all period instrument groups, determines to show that Baroque stringed instruments can shine and sing with the best of them, and never more so than when Rachel Podger is at the helm. Her lead, in the two Concertos for Four Violins, heightened the excitement of their games of pairs, with Pinnock's harpsichord and Paula Chateauneuf's lute radiating, but never dominating the continuo group.

Peter McCarthy's double-bass and Jane Coe's cello sprang into the limelight in the finale of the Concerto for Two Violins in D minor. They led the official soloists quite a dance after the grand fugue of the central movement. But, thanks to Pinnock's buoyant direction, this too was footed featly and seemed, for much of the time, like an exuberant round dance itself.

The light of Vivaldi's Venice was to shine as far north as little grey Weimar: this group of concertos made such an impression on Bach that he couldn't resist transcribing six of them for keyboard. Pinnock played just one: Bach's arrangement of the Op 3 No 9. After spinning gold filigree from the tirelessly imitating sequences of the first movement, Pinnock built up a sense of concentrated meditation in the slow movement, as tiny threads of figuration were woven into the great ringing chords which provided their harmonic frame.

Bach's own secular cantata *Amore traditore* found a soulmate and, if truth be told, a superior, in Benedetto Marcello's fiercely eloquent paraphrase of Psalm 42, *Dal tribunal augusto*. Matthew Hargreaves, a bass-baritone of formidable range, plumbed the heights and depths of this prayer for justice and clemency as its words were in turn solemnised and shaken into new life by their musical setting.

HILARY FINCH

BOOKS

The flowering of passion and greed

Deborah Moggach wonders at the remarkable tale of the tulip, whose mysterious mutations brought delight and ruin from Turkey to The Netherlands

The Tulip is a stylish book, beautifully illustrated, and it gets off to a cracking start. Anna Pavord is one of our most inspired gardening writers and can make the building of a compost heap into high drama. The history of the tulip, in its early years, is a more ambitious subject, for the story of this flower is an extraordinary one. She writes: "Its background is full of more mysteries, dramas, dilemmas, disasters and triumphs than any besotted *aficionado* could reasonably expect."

The tulip grows wild in Turkey and the Turks were the first to fall under its spell. In 1574 Sultan Selim II ordered 300,000 bulbs for his palace gardens. His chief gardener was also his chief executioner, and anyone who tried to trade in bulbs at a higher price than the official one was expelled from the city, or worse. The beauty of tulips were celebrated in their names — "Increaser of Joy", "Star of Felicity" — and women were wooed by them: "When a young man presents a tulip to his mistress he gives her to understand by the general colour of the flower, that he is on fire with her beauty, and by the black base, that his heart is burned to coal."

Breeders developed new forms and wrote rulebooks specifying the perfect tulip. The passion peaked during the time of Sultan Ahmed III (1703-30), a man so besotted that his reign has been renamed The Tulip Era. The Sultan spent vast amounts on lavish tulip festivals. "Thousands of tulip flowers were mounted on pyramids and towers, with lanterns and cages of singing birds hung between them. Tulips filled the flowerbeds, each marked with a label of filigree silver." Guests dressed in clothes matching the tulips and hundreds of tortoises walked around with candles on their shells. These festivals

THE TULIP
By Anna Pavord
Bloomsbury, £30
ISBN 0 7475 4296 1



would continue throughout all the nights that the tulips were in flower, and in the end caused the Sultan's downfall, when his people rebelled against such extravagance.

Meanwhile, in Europe, bulbs were fetching astonishingly high prices. The French were gripped by tulipomania, and in the early 17th century a miller exchanged his mill for one bulb of "Mère Brune". Fashionable women wore tulips in their *decolletage*. And in the Dutch Republic, speculation on tulip bulbs spiralled completely out of control.

The Dutch tulipomania is one of history's most bizarre episodes. How did such a sensible, God-fearing people succumb to such madness? I have recently explored this episode, in fiction, for it has all the ingredients of high storytelling — greed, lust for beauty, human weakness and a recklessly gathering momentum towards its own destruction. No novelist could have dreamt up such an enthralling drama.

By the early 1600s the Dutch Republic was a rich trading nation awash with capital. Growers were developing new varieties of tulips and those with rare mutations were fetching huge prices. Nobody knew how these occurred, so people started gambling on them, and this game of chance started to grip the nation. Speculators ranged across the classes — bargekeepers and butchers, as well as the wealthy — and consortiums gathered in taverns where bidding was conducted in a fug of tobacco smoke. "Semper Augustus" was the rarest of all — a beautiful red and white tulip — and at the height of the madness one bulb could fetch the price of a townhouse. Tulipomania peaked in 1636 when speculation was conducted on tulip futures, and vast fortunes were both made and lost.

Priests railed against it but were powerless to stop this obsession with a flower which, in Dutch art, represented both the beauty and the fragility of life. The crash came in 1637 when the Government stepped in, but by this time the economy was seriously damaged and many lives ruined. Only recently has the secret of these mutations been discovered — they are caused by disease. If the priests had known that, how they would have thundered from their pulpits!

Although Pavord tries to keep up the pace, the story of the tulip since then slackens somewhat. In this country it fell out of fashion in the 18th century, when Capability Brown's influence replaced gardens with parks, and the story fizzles out into squabbles — between the North of England and the South, between working men's societies and professional growers. Our own Tulip War in the 1840s was caused by a quarrel over the perfect shape — whether "the pole should be a little depressed ... which will give the flower a good shoulder". A very British reaction to this seductive flower which has wreaked havoc and imparted joy and which, like Cleopatra, is capable of infinite variety.

Deborah Moggach's Tulip Fever *will be published later this year by Heinemann.*



THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, LONDON

R. J. Thorton's *The Temple of Flora*, 1812: the British fashion for tulips was restrained compared with the craze that almost ruined the Dutch Republic

Slavery's legacy leaves a lasting mark

Phyllis Perry's literary forebears include Toni Morrison

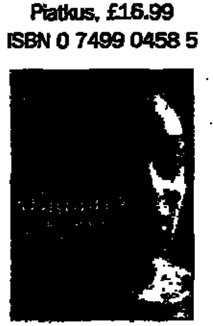
Pain, we are taught to believe, is a passing thing — our bodies are not designed to remember it. But Phyllis Perry's intense first novel is a passionate argument that we should listen to the story that pain has to tell.

The novel opens in 1994, as 34-year-old Lizzie is being released from an Atlanta mental hospital. Through the series of flashbacks and diary entries that in part make up this book the layers of the narrative — of truth and hidden lives — are slowly unfolded.

When Lizzie was 14 and the only child of black middle-class parents, she had inherited her grandmother Grace's trunk, finding inside a memoir dictated at the end of the 19th century by her great-great-grandmother, Bessie. With it is also a quilt, made by Grace. The images appliquéd on the fabric tell the story of Bessie and how, as a child in Africa, she was separated from her mother and captured by slavers. Wrapped in the quilt, her head ringing with the strange words of her great-great-grandmother, Lizzie begins to dream of those vanished African days and when she wakes there is dust on her feet and a burning sensation on her wrists.

JILL WATERS

STIGMATA
By Phyllis Perry
Piatkus, £16.99
ISBN 0 7499 0458 5



By the time she is 20, Lizzie has begun to see her ancestors and talk in the voices of her long dead grandmothers. She feels the pain of scars which map the wounds of the manacles and whips inflicted on Bessie. But when blood begins to ooze from her injuries the doctors decide that this is dangerous self-mutilation.

Perry controls the layers of her narrative well, moving with confidence between Lizzie's life after her release and the episodes of "remembering" which confined her to a series of hospitals for 14 years. Lizzie's past incarnations as her own mother's mother and also as her great-great-grandmother are terrifying and revelatory.

The vernacular of Bessie's memoir is both haltingly earthy and lyrical. Lizzie learns "at firsthand" the agony and the losses suffered by successive generations of women in her family. A Roman Catholic priest at one of the hospitals introduces her to the idea of stigmata. It seems to make sense. She finally comes to terms with how her new pasts can bridge the gulf that exists between herself and her own mother.

At times the idea of reincarnation is a little strained — particularly in a new relationship that Lizzie forges with an artist who has painted her, although they have never met before. But as a device it serves its purpose well enough. Her publishers claim that Perry is part of the tradition of black American writing established by Toni Morrison and Alice Walker, and indeed at times there is a sense that this story has been told before. But it is a tradition of powerful writing and one this writer has every right to aspire to join.

■ THE French have embraced the British fervour for ranking their novelists. Next Wednesday Kazuo Ishiguro will be made a Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; the next day Salman Rushdie will be raised above him as a Commandeur of the same order. Well, Rushdie did win the "Booker of Bookers" for *Midnight's Children*, although practically the only *reference to le beau pays in* his novels is the mention of a "thunderous burgundy" being drunk at a lunch party in Highgate.

■ *Chris Hartley writes to us from the Midlands: "May I question the validity of the 'Christian answer' in Roger Scruton's review of* All in the Mind *by Ludovic Kennedy (Books, January 7). Why should the scientific description of one substantial entity, such as my wife, bring into doubt her own existence while a similarly defined description of another entity, the Earth, cast doubt only over the existence of their creator? I was also bemused to learn earlier that same day that religion differed from superstition because it does (Thought for the Day, R4). Some of us*





are clearly missing something but I wonder what and would welcome clarification."

■ WHO says the literati are polite? At Monday's T. S. Eliot prizegiving in London (winner: T. Hughes), Martyn Goff, chairman of the board of the Poetry Book Society, thanked OUP for its financial support — given before it scrapped its poetry list. Response from poets and pundits alike? A bout of boos and hisses.

■ BUT interviewed in the current issue of the *Paris Review*, the American poet Mark Strand takes a line that will infuriate his hard-up fellows. Poetry, he says, "should have no monetary value". Do we hear more hissing?

■ books@the-times.co.uk

A critic who knows the way — and perhaps can drive the car, too

The blurb tells us that these essays make up "a book of passionate engagement". This officious claim, for which I feel sure we cannot blame the author, should be enough to put any reader off. Every good critic loves books and becomes deeply involved in the life inside them, and James Wood is a very good critic indeed. He has no need to exhibit passionate engagement, whatever that is supposed to mean. So do not be put off: but enjoy instead the many good things Wood has to offer, and the brilliance with which this review collection, drawn mostly from *The New Republic*, *The Guardian*, and *The London Review of Books*, offers a central insight on each one of the authors under discussion.

Wood is particularly brilliant on his own near contemporaries, pointing out the almost exaggerated Englishness of Julian Barnes, which is no doubt the reason why Barnes, like P. G. Wodehouse before him, has enjoyed such tremendous success among Anglophile readers in France.

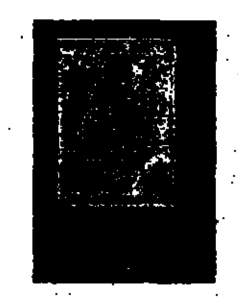
Barnes is as English, it could be said, as was by stylistic adoption André Maurois, author of *Les Silences du Colonel Bramble*. Barnes is a cuddly author masquerading as a knowing one, and in that sense makes a great contrast with that streetwise young American-by-adoption, Martin Amis.

Amis learnt from his master, Saul Bellow, "how to drop his characters deep into the tank of the contemporary", although in the process, very different from that of the great Bellow, he imprisons them in a burlesque act, like Laurel and Hardy or Tom and Jerry, out of which they cannot escape or develop.

Wood's forte is his ability to put a finger on exactly what is good about his authors and what is limiting. He is scrupulously fair about the very real charisma engendered by Toni Morrison's successes, like *The Color Purple*, but points out the ways in which her magic must nonetheless be false: "Since fiction is itself a kind of magic, the novel should not be magical . . . The argument against magical realism in fiction should not be an argument about what is real and what is unreal, but an argument about belief."

Wood himself believes that belief is as necessary to a novelist as water is to a growing plant, and he strongly implies that the premises of Post-Modernism, however unconscious may be their operation in the psyche of a given writer, can only be both weakening and restricting for a novelist of real talent. The psyche of a Melville or a Tolstoy was literally geared to belief, even though Melville may have had no idea what the white whale really signified, and Tolstoy could never rest securely in any belief that he thought he had found.

THE BROKEN ESTATE
Essays on Literature and Belief
By James Wood
Jonathan Cape, £16.99
ISBN 0 224 05294 2

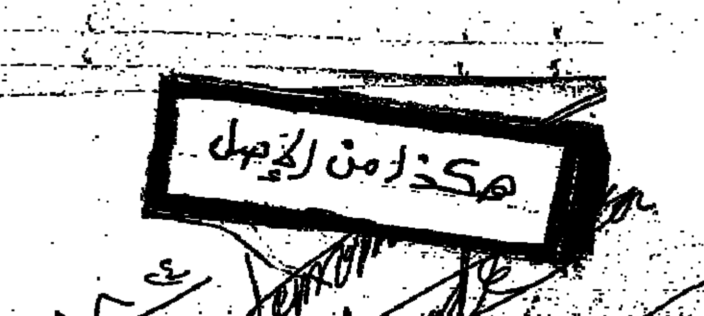


In the same spirit, Wood both profoundly respects and bitterly criticises the character of Sir Thomas More, not a man for all seasons but one in whom the natural goodness of humour and humanitarianism fought a losing battle with the ferocity of authoritarian conviction.

He sees belief in oneself as a cardinal virtue in Jane Austen: *it is the inner consciousness of* her heroines that makes them both happy and intelligent, and enables Anne Elliot in *Persuasion* to pity her father and sister "for being less happy than she was . . . Her happiness was from within." This point is at once very simple and very subtle. The inner confidence of Jane Austen is itself a kind of faith that can inspire and hold a thoughtful reader.

Wood is as penetrating a connoisseur of a writer's style as he is of the ways in which a writer establishes his authority. "To be utterly free in language, to be absolute master of what you do not own — *this is the* greatest desire of any writer." D. H. Lawrence can achieve his own marvellous exactness with the apparent negligence of his gulls, "swinging like a half-born thought". Wood gives another graphic example: "In the silence it seemed he could hear the panther-like dropping of infinite snow." Why panther-like? It is perfect, and yet inexplicable — "subtly abstract" as Wood observes, and yet physically immediate. That perception gives a very good idea of his own virtues as a critic.

JOHN BAYLEY



BOOKS

Never mind the creativity, feel the sweat

Do creative writing courses really add to the fund of literature? On the evidence of two new works, they at least offer hope

Erica Wagner

The young concert pianist sits down at his instrument. There is an expectant hush. Will he really be as good as they say, this stripling now embarking on a musical career? Surely most of what you hear is hype. And then, when his hands are poised above the keyboard to begin, a whisper goes round the auditorium. Did you hear, says one to another, he actually *practises*? I heard, says someone else, he has had *lessons*. Practising? Lessons? Whatever next? A ripple of disgust moves through the audience. Where's the natural talent in that?

A laughable scenario, perhaps. But what if the artist in question is not a pianist but a writer? What if that writer has taken part in a "creative writing course" — or, even worse, has a degree in the subject? What is an "MA in creative writing"? What can that possibly mean?

No more than our young pianist's degree in musicology. Neither is a guarantee of success: only evidence of the student's commitment to his or her art. The old perspiration/inspiration ratio, in my experience, still holds true: undertaking a degree in creative writing — there are now more than 20 MAs running in Great Britain alone — at least demonstrates a willingness to expend the necessary quarts of sweat.

Resistance to the teaching of creative writing in this country has lessened considerably since Malcolm Bradbury started up the first MA in the subject at the University of East Anglia nearly 30 years ago — with a single student, a young man named Ian McEwan.

Resistance in Britain, Bradbury points out, was always bound to be greater than it ever was in the United States, Canada or Australia where creative writing courses, from the 19th century on, existed as part of a conscious effort to form a literary culture.

But the British already had a literary culture, thank you very much: nobody had to sit Chaucer and Shakespeare in a fen-bound classroom and teach them how to write, did they? Of course not: and what Shakespeare wrought could never be "taught", as such. But — and here I will come out of the closet and confess I speak from personal experience — there can be few things as valuable to a writer as the goodwilled companionship and insight of other writers. When I did my MA in Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia, that was what I took away and continue to keep with me. Some are happy to struggle alone: for some, the knowledge that the struggle goes on too in others' heads is infinitely useful — and comforting.

The East Anglia course, has, since its inception, had a high profile. Andrew Motion has taken over from Malcolm Bradbury; writers like Rose Tremain, Kazuo Ishiguro, Deirdre Madden, Anne Enright and McEwan, to name a few, have been associated with it.

Now, published a few days apart, are two more books that bear the stamp of the course. A collection of short stories, *It Cracks Like Breaking Skin*, by Stephen Foster is published by Faber & Faber (£9.99; ISBN 0 571 19506 7) and a novel, *Columbus Day*, by Janette Jenkins (Chatto & Windus, £10; ISBN 0 701 16831 5). What have these two writers learnt? Should we value them any more highly because they have served formal apprenticeships to their craft?

Unfortunately, Foster's book bears some of the scars of creative-writing-itis. My first question was: does it? *It Cracks Like Breaking Skin* has a good sound: but does breaking skin, after all, crack? Writing that is carefully thought out as well as polished — and this is certainly polished prose in its minimalist way — shouldn't make the reader ask this kind of question.

These loosely linked stories depict, for the most part, a young man's growing up in the Midlands; they have the kind of flat, studied casualness that is in danger of giving the adjective Carveresque a bad name. Raymond Carver's art was so apparently simple that the temptation can be to believe that it's possible to write bluntly about not very much and still get a story at the end of it. But Carver's art was subtle, not simple, and this is just not true.

Foster has fallen into the trap: most of these short sequences (there are 17 of them in a 150-page book) are vignettes rather than tales. They read like the beginning or the middle of something, but nothing whole. Character isn't given too much of a chance beyond caricature. There is, however, a voice lurking here: will the mostly central character of Hewitt become the protagonist of the novel on which Foster is apparently at work? It will be worth finding out.

Janette Jenkins does have a story in her, and her first novel captures the unswerving love of a child with truth and tenderness. It is narrated by Jess, whose mother Olivia's search for her own lost father — he disappeared when she was eight — tips Olivia into madness.

The depiction of madness is a tall order for a novelist, and too often Olivia seems, stereotypically, a vague pale wraith in a long, unfashionable dress. What emerges as most compelling in this novel is the love that Jess's father, Roland, maintains for his very much younger, and very much damaged, wife.

Roland's development in the book from an unknown quantity smelling of whisky and leather to a movingly willing and inventive spouse draws the reader through this novel quite happily. Jenkins flounders rather towards the end, but that's not an uncommon failing in a first novel; this is a fine debut.

Whether either of these books would have been any worse or any better had their authors not "learnt" creative writing is impossible to judge. It is possible, however, to believe that the much-discussed death of the British novel may be held off by the evidence creative writing courses provide of a wealth of young writers eager to learn their craft and turn it to art.



Tangled up and blue

THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS
By Don Hannah
Granta, £9.99
ISBN 1 86207 232 9

IN a small Canadian town lives get tangled up and blue. Don Hannah, the award-winning playwright, has written a wonderfully sinister novel, almost Gothic, in which all the wrong people seem to meet for all the right reasons. Sandy Whyte, community linchpin, finds his heartstrings aflutter when he spies a young boy on his property. Then there is Gloria, his cleaner, still considered a bit of an oddity for claiming, as a child, to have seen the Virgin Mary, and Raymond, her brother, who thinks he has seen a similar vision in Sandy's house. Hannah writes with smooth precision, making the ordinary seem anything but.

Good ol' boy

LOUISIANA POWER AND LIGHT
By John Dufresne
Vintage, £6.99
ISBN 0 09 927747 6

DUFRESNE'S revelatory tale begins in Monroe, Louisiana — City of Steady Habits, Crossroads to Pipelines, Corrugated Paper Capital of the North Delta Parishes, elevation 65 ft, population 56,600 — where telling tales of the Fontanas is as natural as bathing in the Mississippi. Initially, we are introduced to the line — which includes Peregrine Fontana, who sired two albino sons before he was drowned by Yankee soldiers, and Mangham and Bosco Fontana, who claimed to be the Lost Tribe of Israel. But the main thrust involves the family's last survivor, Billy Wayne Fontana. As this wild-man turned free spirit hits the rocky road there is plenty to make us laugh.

Futurescape

ENDLAND STORIES
By Tim Etchells
Pulp Books, £8.99
ISBN 1 901072 12 6

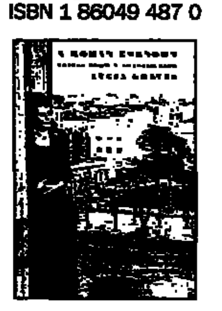
THIS may be just another millennium collection, but Tim Etchells is not just another author. *Endland Stories* is a set of tales based around the fictional country of Endland where the scenery is taken straight from a low-budget *Blade Runner*. A woman renames herself Silence in want of a bit of peace, the goddess Helen and the god Apollo 12 give birth to twin boys, Porridge and Spatula, and even the tears people shed have a copyright. But it is not just in the trimmings that Etchells succeeds. He brilliantly welds together archaic language with computer-speak to create a funny, caustic collection.

ALEX O'CONNELL

Goodbye to all that's me

The autobiography of Lucia Graves lacks focus, says Ilan Stavans

A WOMAN UNKNOWN
Voices from a Spanish Life
By Lucia Graves
Virago, £18.99
ISBN 1 86049 487 0



Lucia Graves is a daughter of the poet Robert Graves from his second marriage. In this, her first book, ignited by a surgical operation her mother underwent in Barcelona in 1996, she only marginally dwells upon his legacy.

Her primary themes, instead, are her own upbringing in Majorca, where she made her home as a child with her family in 1946, her education in Geneva and England, her marriage to a Spanish musician in 1965, and her enlightening if perplexing return to the Iberian peninsula; and also, and in contrast, the plight of women during the Spanish Civil War, through Franco's regime, and under democracy.

This duality — Spain and herself, portrayed as siblings growing up simultaneously — results in an utter lack of focus, for whenever possible Graves sidesteps her autobiographical "I" to profile significant female acquaintances that left a lasting impression in her upbringing: a midwife, a ballet teacher, a nun . . . How significant these acquaintances are is not in question; the trouble is, the reader quickly grows impatient with them, skipping pages, since these profiles are inadvertently presented as distractions.

The argument might be made, of course, that such distractions are precisely what the book is about: a tapestry of women's journeys, structured as a Scheherazade-like tale of tales wherein the primary teller delivers a mosaic of "voices from a Spanish life" still struggling to find their own space. But the only voice that really matters, the only one with any weight, is that of Graves herself, and it is unfortunate that parallel stories, marginal in their essence to the core of the tale, are inserted to enhance her own odyssey.

Not all is misconceived in *A Woman Unknown*, though. Graves's style is harmonious, cinematic, even hypnotising: it seems built against the swift, egotistical texture of *Goodbye to All That*, its impact emerging not from the strength of the author's personality but from the honest desire to rescue memory from oblivion. Her descriptions of Spain's industrialisation, its progressive modernisation, are often enthralling. Her chapters on her bicultural self, part British, part Iberian, not at war with each other but in a continual dialogue, are insightful, as are her reflections on the place of domestic life at the end of this millennium.

These sections are invaluable to understand how dramatically different in nature are Spanish and British civilisations. They should be required reading to those interested in foreigners' views of the Hispanic world, alongside those by Malcolm Lowry, Graham Greene and Peter Matthiessen. Among Graves's best chapters is "The Translation Class", about her experiences as a student, first at the French Lycée in Kensington, then at Oxford, and the process through which she became her father's Spanish translator. This segment highlights not only the pre-eminence of both tongues — Spanish and English — in her mind but the symbolic triumph of the former, the weak one of the two, over its mighty counterpart, a motif at the heart of her volume.

Robert Graves only makes cameo appearances, the ghost of Hamlet's father casting a shadow not fully digested. This also leaves the reader dissatisfied. What is missing, overall, is a centre of gravity.

Portrait of a poet's family: left to right, Lucia Graves, aged 19, brothers Tomás and Juan, her mother Beryl and Robert Graves at home in Majorca

A pursuit of power, but principles too

MANDY
The Unauthorised Biography of Peter Mandelson
By Paul Routledge
Simon & Schuster, £17.99
ISBN 0 684 85175 X





Kiss off: Peter Mandelson

Campaign biographies have never been the most durable form of literature, but until recent times their purpose was to boost the careers of politicians and the fortunes of their parties. Now the genre has changed, and they have become a function of party infighting. Paul Routledge's latest book is a campaign biography directed against Peter Mandelson, and by extension against Tony Blair. Even before publication it has forced Mandelson's resignation from the Cabinet and some are saying that it will ensure his exclusion from power for an indefinite period, perhaps forever.

This is more doubtful, and it would, indeed, be wrong for the career of a serious politician to be destroyed by such a harsh portrayal, whose ideological motives are obvious. Though the book's apparent beneficiary is Gordon Brown, in fact it is clearly an attack by old Labour on new Labour.

Of course, Mandelson has a lot of faults as well as outstanding talents, and he has provided plenty of ammunition for a hostile biographer. It was, moreover, unfortunate for him that, after the landslide 1997 victory, his first job in Government (as Minister without portfolio) offered all too much scope for his manipulative and busybody tendencies, while denying him the opportunity for constructive work. His performance at the Department of Trade was cut short before he could prove himself.

Despite his robustly biased approach, Routledge is a first-class journalist whose respect for facts often gets the better of his partisanship. He draws attention to Mandelson's year in Tanzania between school and university, which seems to have been a deeply formative episode in his life. The socialist experiment of Julius Nyerere that he witnessed in Tanzania was "a far cry" from the Marxism with which he had briefly flirted, though he came to regard it, too, as unpractical and wrong. He cannot fairly be dismissed as just a devious tactician, though it is as such that the book overwhelmingly presents him.

The truth is that all who aspire to achieve great things in politics need to be skilful operators as well as dreamers, and the master-politicians are those who disguise their activities in the former category. Mandelson's trouble is that he has been so conspicuous as an operator that the principled side of him has been obscured.

Routledge implies that, partly because of his homosexuality, he is a rootless individual. During the period of relative leisure that he now faces he has the chance to demonstrate his true quality. Adversity may turn out to be his friend.

JOHN GRIGG

Silence is golden — and it can be speech

JEAN AITCHISON

I SEE A VOICE
Language, Deafness & the Senses — a Philosophical History
By Jonathan Rée
HarperCollins, £19.99
ISBN 0 00 255793 2



The tongue is a somewhat disgusting instrument, the cephalic equivalent of the turgid "virile member", according to the 17th-century doctor John Bulwer, who regarded audible speech as inferior to visible gestures. But the voice is controlled and articulated by our soul, the central spirit located in our heart, in the opinion of the Renaissance metaphysician Francis van Helmont: vocal utterances are infused with a special reproductive power extracted from semen held back from physical emission. They free themselves from our bodies before flying off heavenwards to participate in "everlasting Being".

These bizarre views on the voice are reported in this intriguing book which is primarily a history of attitudes to deafness written by a philosopher at Middlesex University.

The book is composed as a sandwich: it begins with an overview of ideas about sensory experience, particularly the assumption that perception is based on the "five senses". The main, central section is an extended history of attitudes towards the deaf from the 17th century to the 20th century. The final part returns to where the first section broke off, by looking again at the senses within a history of philosophy.

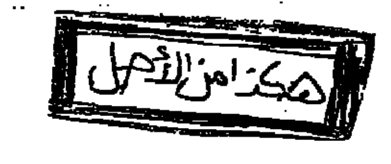
At first, a history of the deaf embedded in philosophical musings seems an arbitrary topic for a 400-page book. Yet the subject goes to the core of our image of ourselves as human beings. Language is at the centre of our sense of self, and notions about its reception and processing are linked to our innermost beliefs.

To current readers, it is perhaps a surprise to find that respected philosophers, such as Locke, Leibniz and Hegel, have made curious pronouncements about the voice and hearing. The views of Leibniz are quaint: if it had not been for man's disobedience in Eden, he speculated, human reproduction could have been accomplished through the medium of speech instead of the humiliating activities to which we have to resort now that our souls are "coated with gross earthly shell". But the book is not just a titillating entertainment. Our views on speech today are affected by various incompatible assumptions, which the author tries to unravel. Well-documented is the clash between those who assume the spoken word is related to the soul and spirituality, and those who regard the voice as either gross or irrelevant. This has carried over into the 20th-century controversy between the "oralists", who want the deaf to learn to speak, and the "gesturalists", who support sign language.

The gesturalists have "won", as the book points out, in that sign language is now rightly regarded as "full" language, which, like written language, uses a different medium from spoken language.

Yet signing in the late 20th century is disappointingly glossed over. No information is given of the recent sign language that has developed spontaneously among the deaf in Nicaragua, for example, and current work comparing first and second generation signers is mentioned only in passing.

Overall, the central historical chapters are clear and enlightening. But they are sandwiched between turgid first and last sections, which veer between pomposity and repetitive obviousness. Yet these early and late sections are not without value, and the myth of the "five senses" is usefully dispelled. Perhaps readers should behave like greedy sandwich-eaters: gobble up the filling, but take only intermittent nibbles at the crusts.



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■ GLENN HODDLE, the England football coach, may need more than a faith healer when his side take on France, the world champions, at Wembley on February 10. For those supporters who live in hope of famous victory, Goldenrail offering tickets to the game and a night's B&B at the Kennedy Hotel, Euston, for £110. Details: 01904 638973.

■ THEATRE tickets will be a bonus to those booking a night at the five-star Conrad Hilton at Chelsea Harbour, London, with the Hotel Directory. The package costs £125 and is available until the end of February. Details: 0181-770 0123.

■ A MUSICAL weekend featuring the works of Mozart takes place at a Peak District guesthouse from January 29 to 31 and can be booked through Countrywide for £96. Details: 0161-446 2226.

■ ROMANTIC cottages are ideal for celebrating Valentine's Day and some with appropriate names are available from English Country Cottages. Lovedays near St Austell, Cornwall, is spacious, sleeps four, and costs £363 for a week from February 13. For a loving couple, Snuggle in the Cotswolds might be more suitable. Designed for two and private, it is available from February 8 for a week for £267. Details: 0870-585 1155.

■ CONNEMARA for a little magic and romance is on offer from Irish Ferries Holidays with a five-night break from February 11 costing £169, including return ferry travel with car, two nights B&B in a Dublin hotel and three in Connemara. Details: 0990 170000.

■ AROMATIC massage oils smoothed on to the sounds of romantic music is the Malmaison hotels' idea of the perfect Valentine's break. The group's hotels in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle are offering the oils and accommodation in rooms with CD players from £75 a night for couples on February, 12, 13 and 14. Details: 0141-221 1052.

World-beaters: see England play France at Wembley

JOHN CLEARE/MOUNTAIN CAMERA



Last-minute opportunities to go cross-country skiing are available: a week in a Swiss three-star hotel will cost from £467

EUROPE

CROSS-COUNTRY skiing can be one of the most rewarding winter sports and some last-minute opportunities are available. The Swiss picture-postcard village of Kandersteg is the base for Headwater Holidays, offering three half-days of langlauf ski lessons and a ski pack. A week's half-board at a three-star hotel from January 23 and 30 costs £467 for adults and £336 for children under 12, based on four people travelling together by car and including ferry crossings. Details: 01606 813367.

■ TRADITIONAL skiing is available at a variety of resorts for a week from January 30 with the Skiers Travel Bureau. The options range from half-board at Borovets, Bulgaria, for £227, Three Valleys, France, for £249, both with flights from Gatwick, to a week in a catered chalet at Saalbach, Austria, for £239, including a flight from Manchester. Details: 01858 468858.

■ SKI independently across country through the Jura mountains on the Franco-Swiss border, suggests Inntravel, which has availability from January 23. The price of £498 includes return Heathrow to Geneva flights, six nights' half-board in three hotels, luggage transportation as well as ski hire. Details: 01653 628862.

■ HALF-TERM skiing holidays for extended families or two or three together are on offer from Direct Line Holidays. Chalets sleeping 12 to 14 at Châtel in the Portes de Soleil are available for a week from February 13 and will cost £589 a person, including half-board, return flights from Gatwick or Manchester and ski guiding. Child discounts are also available. Details: 0181-239 8100.

■ ALICANTE for a week for £79 looks like this week's cheapest winter sun offer and comes from Eclipse. It includes a return flight from Gatwick on January 23 and a room in a two-star hotel. An extra week costs only £30 more. Details: 0990 010203.

■ MALTA holidays are also available at discounts for a week from January 29. Malta Direct Travel offers self-catering in a St Paul's Bay apartment from £167, based on five sharing, and B&B at a five-star resort hotel for £291. Flights are from Gatwick. Details: 0181-785 3233.

■ BRUSSELS breaks are available again with Eurotours, starting from January 21, and feature two nights' B&B at the Hilton Hotel and return Eurostar travel for £139. Details: 0181-289 8889.

■ MADEIRA is usually temperate in the winter, and from next month Explore Worldwide begins a new series of eight-day tours featuring scenic walks, including an ascent of the island's highest mountain and, of course, time to sample the island's most famous product. The holidays cost from £490 with return flights and B&B. Details: 01252 760100.

■ ANTALYA, the Turkish resort with palm-lined boulevards, parks and a leading archaeological museum, is available for winter breaks with Metak Holidays. Fly from Stansted on a choice of dates and stay a week in the Sheraton Hotel, which has a range of sports facilities, for £469. Details: 0171-935 6961.

■ A VISIT to a diamond factory and a chance to win a gem are included in a Valentine's weekend break to Amsterdam with Kirker Holidays. Fly from a choice of UK airports on February 12 and enjoy two nights' B&B in a three-star hotel, plus a city tour, from £229. Details: 0171-231 3333.

LONG HAUL

FLIGHT deals to Australia are the flavour of the month, even though it is still midsummer Down Under. Airlines and tour operators believe that many would-be travellers are waiting for all the excitement surrounding the Sydney Olympics next year, which is good news for those who want to travel now, *Tony Dawe writes.*

Quest Worldwide is leading the way with a £440 return fare from London or Manchester to major Australian cities. The conditions are: stay at least a week and no more than a year and pay by Tuesday. Details: 0181-547 3322.

You have a little longer to save up for Austravel's Great Escape offer to Perth, which costs £455 return and must be booked by the end of March. Details: 0171-584 0202.

■ THE DEALS from Destination Pacific are slightly more expensive, starting at £485 return to Australia, from Heathrow and Manchester, but offer additional savings. Stopovers in Singapore, for example, are available for £1 for the first and £18 for subsequent nights and attractively priced tours to Alice Springs and the Great Barrier Reef are also on offer. Details: 0171-400 7000.

■ RIO DE JANEIRO is another destination available at a bargain price. Bridge The World is offering return flights from Gatwick from tomorrow until the end of March for £419, perfect for catching the Mardi Gras Carnival from February 13 to 17. Details: 0171-911 0900.

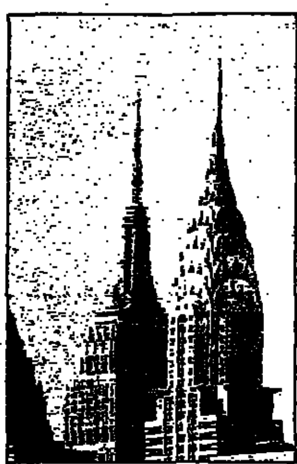
■ CHINA for a week for £739, a £160 saving, is on offer from Premier Holidays and includes four nights in Beijing and two in Xi'an, home of the Terracotta Warriors. Fly from Heathrow on a choice of dates until March 27. Details: 01223 516677.

■ EILAT is available for £199 for a week but you must move fast to catch this offer from First Choice: the flight leaves Gatwick on Sunday. The price includes B&B at a two-star property in the Red Sea resort. Details: 0870-750 0100.

■ RESTED footballers and re-employed managers are now returning from the Caribbean so there is room for the rest of us with a few good high-season deals available. Tropical Places is offering a fortnight at the three-star Bay Gardens in St Lucia for £599 this month with Sunday flights from Gatwick, and Thomas Cook Holidays has a week's all-inclusive at Club Antigua for £779, a £150 saving, available between January 25 and the end of February. Details: Tropical Places, 01342 825123; Thomas Cook, 01733 418450.

■ THE MALDIVES for £529 for a week's all-inclusive holiday is among late deals available from Lunn Poly. This Airtours package starts with a flight from Manchester on January 24. Details from Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

■ GOA is always intriguing but from February 13 to 15 it will be more bizarre than ever with a carnival promising three days of music, dancing, parades and general mayhem. They can all be enjoyed on a fortnight's package with Somak Holidays which starts with a flight from Gatwick on February 5, includes B&B in a resort hotel and costs £429. Details: 0181-423 3000.



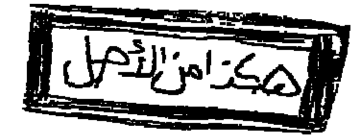
See New York for £319

■ NEW YORK is seldom available at a saving but Funway Holidays has included a package to the city in its new year sales. A return Virgin Atlantic flight from Heathrow and three nights at the Hotel Pennsylvania, close to Madison Square Garden and Broadway theatres, now costs from £319. Details: 0181-466 0222.

● *All prices based on two travelling together and sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.*



See *The Times* on Saturday for more flight bargains and last-minute holidays



BOXING: TYSON SHOWS LITTLE SIGN OF OVERCOMING HIS PROBLEMS BEFORE RETURN TO THE RING

Man still capable of behaving badly

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT
IN LAS VEGAS

MIKE TYSON returns, on Saturday, to the ring here where he disgraced himself. While most sportsmen would face such a prospect with remorse or trepidation, at least, Tyson, it seems, feels little or no pain for the despicable act of biting off a piece of Evander Holyfield's ear in that infamous world heavyweight championship bout in June 1997.

How will the crowd that chanted "Holy, Holy" that night receive Tyson when he enters the ring to face his first opponent in 19 months, Francois Botha, of South Africa. It matters little to Tyson.

The once-respected boxing historian said: "Muhammad Ali *set the style, but* there has never been a fighter as big as Mike Tyson. Yeah, I lost to Holyfield. I bit his ear. He's an outstanding fighter, but he's not Mike Tyson."

Tyson is still raging at the world that does not understand him, or his actions, *inside and outside the ring.* Perhaps that is why he finds it necessary to belittle the man who twice gave him the hiding of his life.

Tyson, who had to be cleared by a team of psychiatrists before getting his licence back from the Nevada State Athletic *Commission, said:* "I'm not supposed to be here now. I was supposed to be finished after Robin Givens [his first wife]. Most of the guys I've fought are in oblivion now and they are fighting to pay crack habits. I've been as low as a man could ever be. But I'm here."

While Tyson is happy to accept *the millions that come to* him as a result of publicity in the press, he is unable to handle media attention. He still laces his replies to journalists he does not like with expletives, or hides behind ramblings of a pseudo-intellectual nature, talking about God, Machiavelli and quoting Nietzsche.

It seemed for a moment, a couple of weeks ago, that the break from his old management of Don King, John Horne and Rory Holloway was beginning to help him to understand his problems. He impressed the readers of *The New York Times* when he appeared to show that he was capable of considerate behaviour. "I want to get my life stabilised," he told the newspaper. "I've been a real jerk.

"I don't know how my wife has been able to stay married to me. She is such a dignified woman, who is not used to the *stuff I've put her through.*" Then, a couple of days later, *Tyson was predicting the* death of Botha. "I expect him to go down cold," he said. "I expect him to die." You could understand what the psychiatrists meant when they said Tyson had "a constellation of neuro-behavioural deficits".

This evaluation was further illustrated the other day, here, when Tyson denigrated Holy*field and Lennox Lewis, and in*sulted sports fans by saying: "If I fight on the same night, they're out of a job. They can't sell out Madison Square Garden. I can sell out Madison Square Garden masturbating.

"I am the champ. These guys talk about me like a god. I am the champ when I'm not the champ. When they are the champs, I'm the king. I'm Mike Tyson and Mike Tyson is gonna be Mike Tyson."

Tyson refused to believe that the Lewis-Holyfield contest at Madison Square Garden, still nearly eight weeks away, was *already sold out while his bout* with Botha at the MGM Grand Garden, just two days away, has still to see the "House Full" notice.

These utterances underline the belief that Tyson, outside the ring, is bigger than Tyson *inside it, and boxing is no long*er a sport but a deception where outrageous comments, coupled with knockouts of hand-picked opponents, take in the gullible. A pity, because as a boxer, Tyson is not a fraud. For the past six weeks, he has been working in Arizona with his new trainer, Tommy Brooks, who was in Holyfield's corner on that fateful June night. "We've gone back to basics. We're getting back to where he used to be," Brooks said.

*Throughout his troubled ex*istence in the past 19 months, Tyson has always had the memory of his legal guardian, Cus D'Amato, to sustain him, so the news that Tyson's accountant had found that D'Amato had left him $200,000 (£122,000) in a savings account should lift his spirits.

"I guess Cus thought I would blow all my money," Tyson said, laughing. "When I was living crazy, I'd spend *$200,000 in one night on belts,* underwear, champagne and girls. To me, $200,000 is insignificant, even if I was doing bad. But when they told me he had left it it was like, wow. You could not give me a million dollars for that account now. What Cus did was truly *overwhelming.*"


Tyson needed clearance from psychiatrists before being allowed to box again and serious doubts about his conduct remain after recent outbursts

AL BELLO / ALLSPORT
Tyson, left, trains for his comeback fight against Botha, the South African heavyweight

CRICKET

Gilchrist puts Sri Lanka to the sword

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

SYDNEY (Sri Lanka won toss): Australia beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets

THE World Cup holders are finding life here more difficult than they would like. Deprived by injury of Aravinda De Silva, their leading batsman, they have lost both games in this triangular series, the second more comprehensively than the first. Australia thumped them at the SCG, making the highest total *any side has made batting* second in 97 one-day internationals on this ground.

Adam Gilchrist, their cavalier wicketkeeper-batsman, smashed a superb 131 from 118 balls, having reached his half-century *in only 37.* The first of his two sixes, a huge heave to *mid-wicket, punished* the last ball of Muralitharan's first over. After that insult, Sri Lanka must have known there was no coming back. His second six, off Jayawardene, took him to his fourth one-day hundred in a year, since he was promoted to opener.

*Muralitharan, the off spin*ner with the *double-jointed* wrist action, has been in the wars since the team arrived in Australia. At Brisbane last Sunday against England, and again in Sydney, his appearance brought jeers and cries of "no ball" when he released the ball. Muralitharan put a brave face on things, and he *will have to, because the feel*ing persists in these parts that he is a "chucker".

The silencing of Darrell Hair, the umpire who called Muralitharan seven times for throwing *during* the Melbourne Test four years ago, has fooled nobody. Hair will be charged with breaching the International Cricket Council's code of *conduct,* for making remarks about the bowler's "diabolical" action in a recent book, but his decision to stand down from this series, to exempt the Australian Cricket Board from disbarring him, does the game no credit.

Relations between Australia and Sri Lanka have not been good since that tour and great was the rejoicing when the Sri Lankans won the *last World* Cup, beating Australia in the *final three years ago.* "Last time they were out here, there was a *bit* of hostility and stuff," Shane Warne, who is leading Australia in these games, said.

Warne took two wickets yesterday though the captain had to do without Brad Young, his left-arm spinner, who smashed his knee and *ankle against the perimeter* board in a vain attempt to save a boundary.

The Australia fielding lacked distinction as Jayasuriya and Tillekeratne made the half-centuries that carried Sri Lanka to a score of 259 for nine. Jayasuriya's 65 came from 62 balls.

Gilchrist made him look a slowcoach. The left-hander *drove powerfully through cov*er and punished anything that could be lifted through mid-wicket. He and Mark Waugh put on 151 and, after Waugh went, Ponting maintained the steady work. Gilchrist eventually skied Vaas to long-on, but the game had long since been *settled in Australia's favour.*

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA
S T Jayasuriya c Gilchrist b Julian 65
†R S *Kaluwitharana* b Warne 32
M S Atapattu c Waugh b Warne 18
H P Tillekeratne run out 73
*A Ranatunga run out 26
D P M Jayawardene c Gilchrist b Julian 11
U D U Chandana b *Fleming* 2
R S Mahanama c Gilchrist b McGrath 5
W P U J C Vaas not out 13
M Muralitharan *run out* 0
Extras (b 2, lb 2, w 5, nb 5) 14
Total (9 wkts, 50 overs) 259
G P Wickremasinghe did not bat.
FALL OF WICKETS: *1-85, 2-106, 3-130, 4-183, 5-214, 6-217, 7-228, 8-256, 9-259.*
BOWLING: McGrath 10-0-39-1; Fleming 10-0-61-1; Blewett 2-0-23-0; Julian *8-0-42-2; Warne 10-1-44-2; Bevan 5-0-26-0;* Martyn 5-0-20-0.

AUSTRALIA
†A C Gilchrist c Atapattu b Vaas 131
M E Waugh c sub b Muralitharan 83
R T Ponting not out 43
D R Martyn not out 16
Extras (lb 3, w 4) 7
Total (2 wkts, 46.1 overs) 260
G S Blewett, M G Bevan, *S K Warne, B P Julian, D W Fleming, B E Young and G D McGrath did not bat.
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-151, 2-225
BOWLING: Vaas 8-1-43-1; Wickremasinghe 7-1-38-0; Muralitharan 10-0-49-1; Jayawardene 7-0-40-0; Chandana 9-0-61-0; Jayasuriya 7.1-0-28-0.
Umpires: T A Prue and S J A Taufel

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

When the defenders have run out of trick-taking ideas in the side-suits, it's time to look for a plan involving trumps. This may entail a forcing defence, a ruff, or a promotion. East missed his chance on this hand from the EBU Autumn *Congress Teams.*

Dealer West **East-West game** **IMPs**

North: ♠ A J 4 3 ♡ A J 8 4 ♢ A Q J ♣ J 5
West: ♠ K 7 ♡ 10 9 7 6 ♢ K 10 8 7 5 ♣ 8 6
East: ♠ Q 10 ♡ 5 3 2 ♢ 9 6 3 2 ♣ A K 7 4
South: ♠ 9 8 6 5 2 ♡ K Q ♢ 4 ♣ Q 10 9 3 2

S	W	N	E
–	Pass	1 H	Pass
1 S	Pass	3 S	Pass
4 S	All Pass		

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: eight of clubs.

East took his ace-king of clubs, South playing the three and the ten, and *switched lamely to a heart.* Declarer played ace and another spade to bang the top trumps together and claimed his contract.

East's first thought after trick two should have been to deduce the club position. The lead of the eight, followed by *the six, was inconsistent with* an honour holding. Nor could it be three small: from that the convention is to lead the middle card and follow with the top card (the acronym is MUD: middle, *up, down). From four small* you lead the second highest and follow with the lowest. So West did not start with 9862. That leaves 86 doubleton as West's only possible club holding.

Thus with South marked with four spades and five clubs, and the diamond *king onside if South needs* it, the defence is clearly exhausted of side-suit options. With two tricks to find in trumps, East must assume his partner holds the king to have a chance. If West has K-x-x trumps any defence will suffice. But *what about when West has* king singleton or doubleton, as in the actual hand? Then West can ruff a third round of clubs with the king, an "uppercut" forcing dummy's ace. Thereby the defence *promote a second and set*ting trump trick.

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Wijk aan Zee

The tournament in the Dutch town of Wijk aan Zee, which is due to start tomorrow boasts a powerful field. It includes Kasparov, Anand, Kramnik, Ivanchuk, Shirov, Svidler and Topalov, as well as Ivan Sokolov, the winner at Hastings.

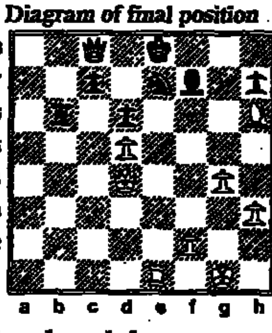
The most notable absentee *is Anatoly Karpov, the Fide* champion. It is also strange that Michael Adams, Nigel Short or Matthew Sadler do not appear in the lists. Nevertheless, this tournament will be one of the major events of the year and I will begin regular reporting from next week. *Here is a game from last* year's event.

White: Viswanathan Anand
Black: Veselin Topalov
Wijk *aan Zee 1998*

Ruy Lopez

1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bb5	a6
4	Ba4	Nf6
5	0-0	b5
6	Bb3	Bc5
7	a4	Rb8
8	c3	d6
9	d4	Bb6
10	axb5	axb5
11	h3	0-0
12	Re1	Re8
13	Na3	b4
14	Nc4	bxc3
15	bxc3	exd4
16	Nxb6	Rxb6
17	cxd4	Nxe4
18	Bxf7+	Kxf7
19	Rxe4	Rxe4
20	Ng5+	Kg8
21	Nxe4	Bf5
22	Ng5	Ne7
23	g4	Bg6
24	Ne6	Qc8
25	d5	Bf7
26	Ng7	Kg7
27	Qd4+	Kf8
28	Bh6+	Ke8
29	Re1	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



London clubs

*Tonight, in the final of the Lon*don clubs' knockout competition, Home House face the Athenaeum. It will be a strong event with former British champions Bob Wade, Peter Lee and Michael Hennigan in action as well as former European junior champion, Shaun *Taulbut and the international* master Ali Mortazavi.

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by email. The address is *keenechess@aol.com. The best* contributions from Times readers will be published either here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from International Grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B.T. Batsford Ltd (tel: *01797 369966 at £6.99+p&p).*

□ Raymond Keene writes on *chess Monday to Friday in* Sport and in the Weekend sec*tion on Saturday*

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

ABAND
a. A fillet
b. To abandon
c. But not

BARBE
a. A dressing-gown
b. A javelin
c. Sir!

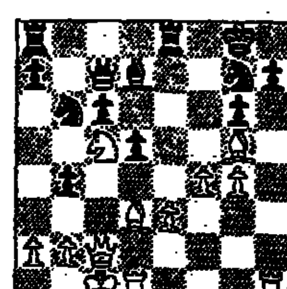
BOUCHET
a. A kiss
b. A wine plug
c. A pear

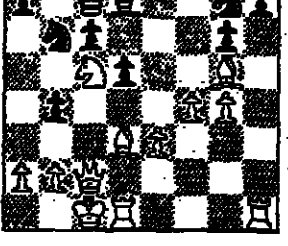
BROOL
a. To weep
b. A lemon drink
c. A humming

Answers on page 46

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene





White to play. This position is from the game Barbero - Mottas, Mendrisio, 1998.

White has sacrificed a pawn to open lines for his pieces. How did he now make the most of these?

Solution on page 46

CYCLING

Boardman determined to show best of British

BY JEREMY WHITTLE

CHRIS BOARDMAN will head *the list of contenders in* the 1999 Prudential Tour of Britain, it was announced in London yesterday. The second edition of the PruTour, which begins in Westminster on May 23, squeezes nine stages of racing into just seven days over a 732-mile route. *The 18 teams of six riders will* visit the South Coast, the *Brecon Beacons and the* Pennines.

"This race *is the best thing* to happen to British cycling since the Tour de France came to Britain in 1994," Boardman, an Olympic gold-medal winner, said at the launch yesterday, "and I'm looking forward to doing my bit on home roads."

After the first stage, a 50-mile circuit race through the streets of Westminster, the 108-man field takes on a 111-mile road race to Portsmouth, which is followed later the same day by a flat 3.1-mile time trial on the Hampshire *seafront,* which is undoubtedly designed to suit Boardman's strengths.

Stage three takes the race from Winchester to Bristol, prior to the 130-mile fourth stage to Swansea. For the first time, the Severn Bridge will be closed to traffic to allow the *PruTour field to cross the Sev*ern estuary before tackling *some of the steepest climbs in* South Wales.

The gruelling finish up Constitution Hill, a cobbled 1 in 3 climb in the centre of Swansea, will, in particular, reveal the men from the boys.

"The day to Swansea is the hardest in the race," Board*man said unequivocally.* "But it's suited to a powerful rider who can sprint a bit — not just a lightweight climber."

As well as Credit Agricole, who sponsor Boardman and Stuart O'Grady, of Australia, his team-mate, and the PruT*our winner last year, the* week-long race *is* expected to attract several other leading European professional teams.

While doping scandals continue to dog the European professional scene, Alan Rushton, the PruTour promoter, is adamant that the British showcase, after the new ethical stance taken by the Tour *de France organisation, will* remain a clean race.

"If we have *any ethical con*cerns over a rider before the race start we will ask that team to withdraw *that* rider," Rushton explained. "If they refuse to do so, we will then consider rescinding their invitation."

PRUTOUR ITINERARY: May 23: Stage 1: Westminster circuit (50 miles). May 24: Stage 2a: Medway-Portsmouth (111 miles). Stage 2b: Portsmouth time trial (3.1 miles). May 25: Stage 3: Winchester-Bristol (110 miles). May 26: Stage 4: Bristol-Swansea (130 miles). May 27: Stage 5: Swansea-Birmingham (128 miles). May 28: Stage 6: Liverpool-Blackpool (85 miles). May 29: Stage 7a: Carlisle-Edinburgh (89 miles). Stage 7b: Edinburgh circuit (25 miles).

SQUASH

Wright flight brings reward

BY COLIN MCQUILLAN

THE absence of Peter Nicol, the world No 1, and Ong Beng Hee, *the world junior champi*on, saw UK Packaging, of Chingford, slump to their first defeat in the SRA National League by 3-2 at Potters Bar this week. They retained the lead in group B from their rivals from Hertfordshire, however, by two points.

Player loyalty clinched the tie for Potters Bar. Sue Wright flew back sleepless from winning the Apawamis Open in New York to clinch the fifth-string rubber by 9-3, 10-8, 7-9, 9-0 against Vicky Lankester, a junior called up when Linda Charman, the first choice, failed to match Wright's enthusiasm for a transatlantic journey.

Leaders of the other groups were similarly pegged back, with TSM Duffield beaten 3-2 *at home by Hallamshire* in group A and UniS Guildford *narrowly escaping with a 3-2* victory at home against UWIC Cardiff, the bottom side in group C.

At 2-1 and 8-0, Hannah Wright-Davies, making her debut for Cardiff, appeared to have her match against Lisa Stephens sewn up until a fire *alarm triggered an evacuation* of the building for more than ten minutes. On their return, Stephens gained a temporary boost from the break, but the Welsh junior claimed the rubber by 9-4, 6-9, 9-1, 9-4.

Gavin Jones, a fellow Wales under-19 player, also made his debut for Cardiff and repeated his unexpected victory in the British Junior Open last week over Adrian Grant, a member of the England squad that won the world junior championship.

Peter Genever, making a long-awaited debut for Chichester after injury, led his club *to a 4-1 win away to Lee-on-So*lent to strengthen its position in second place in group C.

Duffield, without Derek Ryan, the Irish champion who took the men's Apawamis title in New York, were made to struggle by Hallamshire, even though Cassandra Jackman, *the England No 1, returned* from ankle injury problems to beat Cheryl Beaumont in straight games.

Chris Walker, the England and UNW Northumberland captain, who, like Wright, also returned from New York with hours to spare, led his side in the away match against Manchester Northern and was beaten by Marcus Berrett. Jane Martin and Gary Thwaite secured victories, however, to help Northumberland to win 3-2 and move up to third place in group A.


Male: injured

Male era ended by Smith

BY JAMES SCHOLEFIELD

NEIL SMITH, of Great Britain, is the new world rackets champion, bringing to an end the 11-year reign of James Male, *his* compatriot. Male sustained a serious ankle *injury in the American leg of* the challenge last Saturday, which Smith won 4-2, and will not be fit to compete at the Queens Club on Saturday, leaving the organising committee little choice but to declare Smith the new world champion.

This is the first time since 1820, the first year of the world championship, that the title has been decided in such circumstances. "Having been presented with all the medical evidence and considered both players, it was decided that Male must take the court on Saturday or *forfeit* the match and title," a spokesman for the organising committee said.

Smith, who is also the world doubles champion, had lost to Male in two previous finals in 1993 and 1995. "It's been a long time coming and while it's not the way I had planned on *becoming* world champion, it certainly makes up for the *previous defeats," he said.* "I feel this is just reward for all the practice and training I have put in over the years."

Male, 34, who has held the title since 1988, said: "It's a great pity the title has been decided in such an unsatisfactory way, especially as the rules appear to allow for a postponement on medical grounds. Still, Neil deserves credit for playing the way he did in Chicago."

RACING: GOVERNMENT'S REACTION VITAL TO FUTURE OF INDUSTRY

Savill calls for Tote to be transferred to BHB

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

THE importance of New Labour's attitude to racing in the run-up to the millennium was underlined yesterday as the British Horseracing Board (BHB) added a request to assume control of the Tote to renewed calls for major changes in the sport's finances.

Peter Savill, the BHB chairman, is set to meet government ministers soon and their reaction to racing's growing list of demands will determine whether the sport can begin to control its own destiny — or continue to be blighted by inadequate funding.

The BHB's wish to control the Tote was made public at the board's annual forum in London yesterday, attended by racing's main organisations, bookmakers and government officials.

The Government is considering whether the Tote should be privatised, but Savill recalled the recommendation of the Commons home affairs select committee in 1991 to transfer the Tote to racing when there was a suitable racing authority in place. The BHB, established in 1993, now fulfilled the criteria, he said.

"At a time when the Tote is making around £20 million profit per year before its contribution to racing and when the BHB has made such a strong case for an additional annual investment of £105 million, it would be insensitive of Government to contemplate annexing the Tote and selling it to commercial interests.



Savill: robust presentation

"There is no evidence that Government owns the Tote; no Government money has been given to the Tote, either on its foundation or subsequently; and the Tote was founded specifically 'to raise money for racing'. The Tote's advertising claim, presumably endorsed by the Home Office, is 'Bet with the Tote, our profits stay in racing'."

Savill added: "The inference from these points is that racing has a obvious proprietary right to the Tote. The BHB, on behalf of British racing, now asks Government to move to formalise that right and give BHB control of the Tote."

The surprise announcement came after Savill reiterated racing's demands for an extra £80 million from an increased share of betting turnover. Racing would not be fobbed off in the forthcoming levy negotiations "by offers of ten, 20 or even 30 per cent increases in the levy as has been suggested in the press".

In a typically robust presentation, he reminded the forum that when the levy system was introduced in 1961 it stated the amount of levy should be determined by the needs of the racing industry and the capacity of the betting industry to pay.

The BHB's Financial Plan had detailed racing's need for an extra £105 million a year — £25 million of that coming via self-help. The betting industry's profits had swollen from £100 million in 1995 to in excess of £350 million in 1998, and the off-course industry was worth more than £3 billion on recent valuations of Coral and Gus Demmy.

Savill added: "The betting industry is getting richer. In 1998, it made more than three times the profit it made three years earlier. It can clearly afford to pay a lot more and the Levy Board and the Government must ensure it does."

If the levy negotiations between bookmakers and racing end in stalemate — which is certain if Savill sticks to his guns — Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will determine the outcome, and racing's fate will again be in ministerial hands.

In the long run, Savill said, the levy system needed to be replaced by a commercial transaction between bookmakers and racing involving the selling of the (racing) picture signal. "The signal system is the financing system of the future, the levy system the uncommercial system of past."

The huge task Savill faces is not only persuading the Government of the merits of racing's case, but winning its backing for change. He concluded: "We do not wish to be constantly knocking on Government's door with requests for more money, any more than Government wants to involve itself in the commercial affairs of industry. We want to work with Government to assist its withdrawal from commercial matters."

The British Horseracing Board (BHB) has written to the Crown Prosecution Service urging that the long-running investigation into race-fixing be brought to a conclusion "as quickly as possible".

Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the BHB, said: "While recognising that such cases are intrinsically complex, the board shares the view that it is in the best interests of racing, and of those directly involved, that the investigation should be brought to a conclusion as speedily as possible."

JULIAN HERBERT / ALLSPORT



Spencer guides Magic Combination to victory in the Royal Mail Novices' Hurdle at Kempton Park yesterday

Curley gives top marks to Spencer

By Chris McGrath

THE prayers at Thomastown Castle in Co Tipperary are apparently being answered, with Tommy Stack making heartening progress after an attack of meningitis ruined Christmas for Irish racing. According to Barney Curley, however, there is another cause to celebrate in 1999.

Jamie Spencer, the cherubic teenager introduced to the big time by Stack last season, yesterday inspired an endorsement from Curley that was uninhibited even by his theatrical standards.

Spencer, 18, is spending the winter refining what are clearly instinctive gifts on the British all-weather circuit, but yesterday showed their range by partnering Magic Combination to success over timber at Kempton Park.

"He's the best there's been since Martin Moloney," Curley said. "The thing about Moloney was that he was great over jumps and on the Flat. This is only a kid but he's a champion. He's like Frankie (Dettori) was at 18."

A great Irish champion, Moloney won the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1951; the record he had set the previous year for winners in a season endured until the emergence of Charlie Swan.

Stack has known Spencer since he was a child and last May boldly put the apprentice up on his volatile filly, Tarascon, in the Irish 1,000 Guineas. Spencer proved more than a match for his seniors.

Admittedly, it was easier to shine yesterday, when Curley produced the well-backed Magic Combination to canter in the slipstream of the favourite, Norlandic, before cruising clear in the straight.

Tamarindo, disappointing at Ascot last time, sets out to retrieve the promise of his impressive Cheltenham win in the John Bull Chase at Wincanton today. But Princeful's chasing debut, scheduled for Wetherby, has been postponed until Ascot on Saturday.

[illegible]

THUNDERER

1.40 Otago Heights
2.10 SARAS DELIGHT (nap)
2.40 Normanby Road
3.10 Tamarindo
3.45 Mr Jervis
4.15 Brush With Time

Timekeeper's top rating: 1.40 CROKER.

GOING: SOFT — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

1.40 SPETTISBURY NH NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,514: 2m) (14 runners)

101 1/1 BORO SOVEREIGN 19 (D,G,S) (L Wilson) N Henderson 6-11-5 ... M A Fitzgerald —
102 00 BROWNINGS BOY 42 (B Naylor) J Gifford 7-11-5 ... L Aspell 28
103 0-0 CACCINI 14 (G Waterman) C Popham 5-11-5 ... O McPhail (5) —
104 4 HARDILY 68 (Earl Cadogan) Miss H Knight 5-11-5 ... J Culloty —
105 HAVEYOUHEARD (In Touch Partnership) G McCourt 5-11-5 ... D Forth (3) —
106 40-5 JACKSON'S HOLE 16 (Roach Foods Ltd) P Nicholls 6-11-5 ... J Tizzard 35
107 POP OLABUD 33 (B Naylor) J Gifford 7-11-5 ... O Burrows (5) —
108 02/ OTAGO HEIGHTS 621 (Hunt Allen Cross Partnership) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-5 ... B Powell —
109 120- RUNNING WATER 302 (D,S) (H Spooner) P Hedger 6-11-5 ... M Richards —
110 60-6 LITTLE BUD 45 (Mrs J Grist) Miss A M Newton-Smith 5-11-0 ... J R Kavanagh —
[illegible]

[illegible]

2.10 LILLO LUMB CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,182: 3m 1f 110yd) (7 runners)

[illegible]

Long handicap: Koo's Promise 9-4

BETTING: 11-4 Saras Delight, 3-1 Class Of Ninetytwo, 5-1 Malwood Castle, 11-2 Flippance, 7-1 Kilmington, Eshtiaal, 14-1 Koo's Promise.

1998: INDIAN ARROW 10-11-6 C Maude (12-1) M Pipe 10 ran

Class Of Ninetytwo 56l 5th of 7 to Noisy Miner in handicap chase at Ludlow (3m, good). Malwood Castle pulled up in handicap chase at Cheltenham (3m 2l 110yd, heavy); previously 1¼l 2nd of 6 to Lord Of The West in handicap chase at Warwick (3m 2l, good to soft) with Flippance (10lb better off) 18l 4th. Flippance fell in handicap chase at Folkestone (3m 2l, soft); previously 7l 2nd of 5 to Folly Road in handicap chase at Warwick (3m 2l, soft). Kilmington pulled up in handicap chase at Newbury (3m 2l 110yd, soft), previously beat Jurassic Classic 8l in 7-runner handicap chase at Plumpton (3m 1f 110yd, heavy). Eshtiaal beaten a distance 3rd of 8 to Mayday in novice chase at Cheltenham (2m 5l, good to soft), previously 47l 4th of 8 to Bramshaw Wood in novice chase at Kempton (3m, good to soft). Saras Delight beat St Mellion Drive 2l in 8-runner maiden chase at Hereford (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Koo's Promise unseated rider in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good to soft), previously 11l 3rd of 7 to Kinnahalla in handicap chase at Wincanton (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft) with Kilmington (7lb better off) unseated rider.

SARAS DELIGHT gained a deserved first success last time and remains open to further improvement

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: **Wincanton:** 2.40 Captain Morris, New Yorker. 3.45 Simple Arithmetic, Jakes Justice. **Lingfield Park:** 1.00 Pipe Music, Bigwig. 1.30 Scarlet Crescent. 2.00 Mismewmew. 4.05 Mustang. **Wetherby:** 3.55 Aren't We Lucky.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Piste	Conditions: Runs to Resort	Off-piste	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	83	Good	Hard	Powder	Snow	-1	13/01
Obergurgl	50	200	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-8	12/01
Söll	20	70	Good	Open	Varied	Snow	-4	12/01
St Anton	30	300	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	13/01
Canada								
Lake Louise	83	125	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-2	13/01
France								
Alpe d'Huez	70	180	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-11	13/01
Avoriaz	100	120	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	13/01
Flaine	82	210	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	13/01
La Plagne	85	170	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	13/01
La Tania	74	115	Good	Hard	Powder	Snow	-3	13/01
Les Arcs	65	180	Good	Hard	Powder	Cloud	-4	13/01
Megève	50	130	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-2	13/01
Méribel	50	115	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-5	13/01
Tignes	78	170	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	13/01
Val Thorens	70	130	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	13/01
Val d'Isère	78	150	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-6	13/01
Italy								
Cervinia	45	180	Good	Hard	Powder	Snow	-3	13/01
Livigno	52	140	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-7	13/01
Norway								
Geilo	60	60	Good	Open	Varied	[illegible]	-17	07/01
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	30	100	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	13/01
Grindelwald	35	110	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-1	13/01
Klosters	40	140	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-1	13/01
Saas Fee	60	230	Good	Open	Powder	Fair	-6	13/01
St Moritz	60	100	Good	Some	Powder	Cloud	-4	13/01
Verbier	25	160	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-4	13/01
Villars	30	90	Good	Closed	Powder	Snow	-5	13/01
Wengen	20	70	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-3	13/01
Zermatt	65	120	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	-8	13/01
United States								
Aspen	63	85	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-9	13/01
Deer Valley	78	85	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-8	08/01

L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

2.40 BLACKMORE VALE NOVICES CLAIMING HURDLE
(£2,050: 2m) (18 runners)

301 U/ GET TOUGH 138F (M Merridew) E Wheeler 6-12-0 ... C Webb —
302 410062 TREASURE DOME 43 (F) (David Cross Leisure Ltd) C Weedon 5-12-0 ... Mr N Fehily (7) 68
303 4-0550 NORMANBY ROAD 26 (G) (N Oliver) G McCourt 6-11-12 ... H Oliver (5) 68
304 -01623 BUSK 12 (BF,D,S) (J Allen) J Allen 6-11-10 ... X Aizpuru (3) [illegible]
305 PPP6P- CELTIC CARROT 284P (T Price) R J Price 7-11-8 ... Mr S Stronge (7) —
306 0-4PPP CAPTAIN MORRIS 19 (B) (P Wegmann) P Wegmann 7-11-7 ... D Matthews —
307 004-P0 SEE PROSPERITY 63 (Miss S Waterman) Miss S Waterman 7-11-6 ... Mr D O'Meara (7) 27
308 554-P6 ANOTHERONE TO NOTE 6 (H Manners) H Manners 8-11-4 ... Miss P Gundry (7) —
309 8525-0 SOLDIER COVE 8F (Mrs R Burchell) D Burchell 9-11-4 ... D J Burchell —
310 00 NEW YORKER 12F (B) (N Stotts) Miss K Marks 4-11-2 ... Guy Lewis (3) —
311 P- COME ON MAMMA 448 (Mrs H Pull) P Eccles 7-11-7 ... M Scales (7) —
312 362106 GOLDEN LILY 10 (F,S) (Mrs M Fairbairn) R Hodges 6-11-1 ... R Thornton 81
313 05-564 MISTY RAIN 15 (B) (Last Chance Racing) J Spearing 5-10-13 ... A Maguire 63
314 SEA FIG 26F (M Endicott) S Knight 4-10-11 ... D Salter —
315 MYSTERIOUS ECOLOGY 105F (A Lomax) M Pipe 4-10-9 ... A P McCoy —
316 -56816 RIVER FRONTIER 8 (D,G) (G Summers) M Usher 4-10-9 ... D Byrne 81
317 PP RED RISK 13 (J F Jones) S Knight 4-10-8 ... V Slattery —
318 6P TOP MAITE 12F (Top Maite Partnership) G Charles-Jones 4-10-6 ... L Cummins (3) —

BETTING: 4-1 Mysterious Ecology, 5-1 Busk, 11-2 Golden Lily, 6-1 Normanby Road, 13-2 Treasure Dome, 7-1 Misty Rain, 10-1 Soldier Cove, River Frontier, 14-1 others

1998: AMERICANVAL 10-11-8 C Webb (33-1) S Mellor 17 ran

Treasure Dome 1¼l 2nd of 11 to Limit The Damage in novice claiming hurdle at Plumpton (2m 1f, good to soft), previously 53l 6th of 12 to Galzoino in novice hurdle at Fontwell (2m 2f 110yd, good). Normanby Road 66l 13th of 20 to Wadrosa in novice hurdle at Warwick (2m 3l, soft); previously 23l 5th of 10 to Silander A Azam in novice hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). Busk 5¼l 3rd of 10 to Pressa in selling hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, soft). Soldier Cove 78l 11th of 12 to Rake Hey in amateur novice handicap hurdle at Hereford (2m 1f, good); previously 20l 5th of 11 to Aal El Aal in selling hurdle at Hereford (2m 1f, good). New Yorker 27l 7th of 12 to Another Bowled in 3yo novice hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to firm); previously 75l 14th of 16 to Edwards in 3yo novice hurdle at Warwick (2m, good to soft). Golden Lily 29l 6th of 7 to Inclination in mares handicap hurdle at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, heavy). Misty Rain 25l 4th of 15 to Barton Scamp in selling handicap hurdle at Stratford (2m 110yd, heavy); previously 18l 6th of 18 to Desert Power in novice claiming hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good to soft). Mysterious Ecology plating-class middle-distance maiden on the Flat, sold out of Barry Hills' stable 4,000gns in October. River Frontier 58l 6th of 9 to The Robe in novice handicap hurdle at Lingfield (2m 3l 110yd, heavy); previously beat Reggie Buck 2l in 18-runner selling hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good).

TREASURE DOME went close in this grade last time and must again hold every chance

3.10 JOHN BULL CHASE (£10,163: 2m 5f) (5 runners)

401 143-0P MULLIGAN 19 (D,F,G,S) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 9-11-10 ... A Maguire 123
402 11-11P TAMARINDO 26 (BF,F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 6-11-10 ... A P McCoy [illegible]
403 31-121 WAYWARD KING 19 (CD,G,S) (Fieldspring Racing) R Hodges 7-11-10 ... T Dascombe 137
404 1-PP43 THE LAND AGENT 19 (S) (D Bare) J Mullins 8-11-6 ... M A Fitzgerald 141
405 5P6441 INDIAN RUN 13 (D,G,S) (P Slade) R Hodges 10-11-2 ... P Holley 71

BETTING: 5-4 Tamarindo, 5-2 Wayward King, 9-2 Mulligan, 6-1 The Land Agent, 16-1 Indian Run.

1998: CALLISOE BAY 9-11-6 J A McCarthy (7-2) O Sherwood 5 ran

Mulligan pulled up in chase grade 1 at Kempton (3m, heavy); previously 38l 6th of 13 to Northern Starlight in handicap chase grade 3 at Cheltenham (2m 5l, good to soft). Tamarindo pulled up in handicap chase at As- [illegible]

3.45 CORSCOMBE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (SHOWCASE RACE AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE) (£3,778: 2m 5f) (14 runners)

[illegible]

4.15 JAMBOREE CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,374: 2m) (11 runners)

[illegible]

COURSE SPECIALISTS

[illegible]

WETHERBY

THUNDERER

1.20 Demi Century. 1.50 Cardinal Rule. 2.20 Kings Measure. 2.50 Share Options. 3.25 Edmond. 3.55 Scotmail Lad.

GOING: HEAVY (7.30AM INSPECTION, FROST ON TRACK) — SIS

1.20 EBF NH NOVICES HURDLE (QUALIFIER)
(£3,116: 2m 4f 110yd) (13 runners)

1 6 ALTHREY TORCH 27 W Clay 7-11-0 ... G Tormey —
2 116 CALLFOURSEASONS 54 (C,S) Mrs A Swinbank 7-11-0 ... J Supple 73
3 -4 CARBURY CROSS 27 J J O'Neill 5-11-0 ... R McGrath [illegible]
4 6-P2 DEMI CENTURY 19 Mrs S Smith 7-11-0 ... S Durack 56
5 0-0 ELSARONI 16 J Turner 5-11-0 ... R Supple —
6 5-56 GALINDO 19 J Howard Johnson 5-11-0 ... D Parker 74
7 -P25 GUS BERRY 31 (S) D M Forster 6-11-0 ... N Williamson 68
8 HARMONY HILL J Parkes 7-11-0 ... A Dobbin —
9 MEADOWBANK M W Easterby 5-11-0 ... R Garritty —
10 6-52 PRINCE TOR 29 S Brookshaw 6-11-0 ... W Marston —
11 003 RADMORE SAXON 15 J Jefferson 5-11-0 ... L Wyer —
12 0 VIRTUOUS CIRCLE 44 B Ellison 5-11-0 ... A S Smith —
13 4F0- KERRISDALE 327 P Beaumont 7-10-9 ... B Grattan (3) —

5-2 Callfourseasons, 3-1 Demi Century, 5-1 Carbury Cross, 6-1 Prince Tor, 8-1 others.

1.50 WIKE HANDICAP CHASE (£3,711: 2m 4½f) (4)

1 -UP1 CARDINAL RULE 14 (D,G,S) Miss V Williams 10-11-10 ... N Williamson 72
2 2-2P TOO PLUSH 35 (BF,D,F,G,S) A Turnell 10-11-10 ... L Harvey 93
3 1321- RIVER UNSHION 31 (CD,F,G,S) J Howard Johnson 9-11-3 ... D Parker [illegible]
4 PP53 MONAUGHTY MAN 16 (S) E Cane 13-10-0 ... Gary Lyons —

4-5 Cardinal Rule, 2-1 River Unshion, 4-1 Too Plush, 100-1 Monaughty Man

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Mrs A Swinbank, 3 winners from 12 runners, 25.0%, T Easterby, 32 from 133, 24.1%, Mrs S Smith, 18 from 95, 18.9%, J Jefferson, 5 from 29, 17.2%, L Lungo, 6 from 39, 15.4%, J Howard Johnson, 11 from 74, 14.9%.

JOCKEYS: L Wyer, 43 winners from 149 rides, 28.9%, S Durack, 5 from 21, 23.8%, J Osborne, 4 from 18, 22.2%, B Grattan, 4 from 23, 17.4%, A Dobbin, 16 from 104, 15.4%; R McGrath, 6 from 39, 15.4%.

2.20 COWTHORPE HANDICAP HURDLE
(£4,549: 2m) (5)

1 01-4 KINGS MEASURE 17 (D,G,S) J Jefferson 6-11-10 ... R Guest [illegible]
2 P6-2 GROOVING 31 (D,F,G,S) J Howard Johnson 10-11-2 ... N Williamson 85
3 -342 KINGDOM EMPEROR 27 (D,F,S) W Clay 5-11-0 ... G Tormey 116
4 2512 CUMBRIAN MAESTRO 13 (B,D,S) T Easterby 6-10-10 ... L Wyer 115
5 0-62 CAP IT IF YOU CAN 18 (D,S) T Caldwell 6-10-7 ... Mr R Forristal (5) 89

5-4 Kings Measure, 11-4 Cumbrian Maestro, 5-1 Kingdom Emperor, 7-1 Grooving, Cap It If You Can.

2.50 MONKTON HANDICAP CHASE
(£8,130: 3m 1f) (6)

1 -P3F LISTEN TIMMY 12 (G,S) S Brookshaw 10-11-10 ... W Marston 88
2 2/11 SANTA CONCERTO 18 (D,S) L Lungo 10-11-6 ... R Supple 128
3 2241 YOUNG KENNY 19 (D,G,S) P Beaumont 8-11-5 ... N Williamson 139
4 22-1 STEP ON EYRE 29 (G,S) H Daly 9-11-1 ... S Wynne 122
5 1142 SHARE OPTIONS 12 (BF,CD,F,S) T Easterby 8-10-9 ... L Wyer [illegible]
6 BP5P QUIXALL CROSSETT 16 E Caine 14-10-0 ... Gary Lyons 75

5-4 Santa Concerto, 4-1 Young Kenny, 9-2 Share Options, 5-1 Listen Timmy, 6-1 Step On Eyre, 200-1 Quixall Crossett.

3.25 TOWTON NOVICES CHASE
(£12,560: 3m 1f) (5)

1 1112 KADOU NONANTAIS 13 (BF,S) O Sherwood 6-11-13 ... J Osborne [illegible]
2 1031 ARDENT SCOUT 17 (CD,G,S) Mrs S Smith 7-11-9 ... S Durack 111
3 1-11 EDMOND 28 (S) H Daly 7-11-9 ... S Wynne 123
4 0211 SCOTTON GREEN 7 (D,G,S) T Easterby 8-11-9 ... L Wyer 111
5 -FU2 KING PIN 17 (F,G,S) P Beaumont 7-11-5 ... B Grattan 92

5-4 Kadou Nonantais, 9-4 Edmond, 11-2 Scotton Green, 8-1 Ardent Scout, 9-1 King Pin.

3.55 HEALAUGH CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,066: 2m 4f 110yd) (7)

1 1341 SCOTMAIL LAD 19 (D,G,S) G M Moore 5-11-11 ... N Hannity (3) 83
2 -342 AREN'T WE LUCKY 12 (B) J J O'Neill 6-11-2 ... R McGrath [illegible]
3 P/1- SKARE RIVER 440 (D,G) Mrs S Smith 8-10-12 ... D Elsworth (7) —
4 -143 MISTY CLASS 19 (S) Mrs S Smith 7-10-11 ... S Durack 105
5 25-P BUABHALL MOR 49 M Todhunter 6-10-10 ... C McCormack 76
6 -823 GLACIAL DANCER 66 (BF,S) L Lungo 6-10-1 ... W Dowling 81
7 4031 JAGO 7 (B,S) M W Easterby 4-10-0 (6ex) ... G Lee 87

7-4 Scotmail Lad, 7-2 Aren't We Lucky, 11-2 Misty Class, Glacial Dancer, 10-1 Skare River, Jago, 12-1 Buabhall Mor

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER

1.00 Pipe Music. 1.30 Muhandis. 2.00 Speedy Classic. 2.30 Pertemps Mission. 3.00 Mutasawwar. 3.35 Shogun. 4.05 Comeoutofthefog.

GOING: STANDARD — SIS

DRAW: 6F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.00 LINGFIELD RACECOURSE & STATION HANDICAP (Div I: £1,688: 2m) (11 runners)

1 5-23 PIPE MUSIC 5 (B,BF) P Haslam 4-9-10 ... L Charnock 10
2 34-4 SPICK AND SPAN 13 P Hedger 5-9-5 ... Dane O'Neill 9
3 20-5 ROWLANDSONS CHARM 9 (V) Miss B Sanders 6-9-1 ... A Clark 1
4 /00- ELA-YIE-MOU 37J (F) L A Dace 6-8-13 ... T G McLaughlin 2
5 000/ BROTHER BEACON 52J P Chamings 8-8-6 ... R Perham 3
6 00/0 FRONTIER FLIGHT 6 (G) P Hiatt 9-8-6 ... D Williams (7) 4
7 00-6 QUEEN OF TIDES 9 S Dow 4-7-12 ... P Doe (5) 8
8 63-0 KATIE'S CRACKER 6 (S) M Quinn 4-7-11 ... F Norton 7
9 040- DADDY'S POLLY 19J B Llewellyn 5-7-10 ... A Polli (3) 5
10 000/ BIGWIG 40J (B) G L Moore 6-7-10 ... R Brisland (7) 11
11 00-0 TIGGY SILVANO 9 M Quinn 4-7-10 ... G Bardwell 6

5-4 Pipe Music, 4-1 Spick And Span, 6-1 Katie's Cracker, 7-1 Rowlandsons Charm, 12-1 Queen Of Tides, Daddy's Polly, 16-1 Ela-Yie-Mou, 33-1 others.

1.30 LITTLE ACORNS SELLING HANDICAP
(£1,946: 1m 4f) (16)

1 02-0 MUHANDIS 13 (B,C,F) G L Moore 6-10-0 ... Candy Morris 15
2 050- SCARLET CRESCENT 15 (B,F,G) M Usher 5-9-11 ... W Hutchinson (7) 2
3 006- EIN TRESOR 19J B Llewellyn 5-9-9 ... A Polli (3) 16
4 42-2 MARADI 9 (BF,D) B Curley 5-9-5 ... J P Spencer (3) 7
5 0-61 LATIN BAY 9 (C,F) G Lewis 4-9-4 (6ex) ... P Doe (5) 3
6 800/ MHEANMETOO 833J (F) A P Jones 8-9-2 ... T Sprake 9
7 200- MEMORY'S MUSIC 14J (CD) M Madgwick 7-9-1 ... R Cochrane 1
8 000- CARMARTHEN BAY 40J (C) B Llewellyn 6-8-13 ... R Havlin 4
9 00-3 LIGHTNING REBEL 12 P Hiatt 5-8-13 ... S Righton (7) 6
10 03-0 PRIX DE CLERMONT 9 (B,D) G L Moore 5-8-12 ... Dane O'Neill 12
11 60-0 COASTGUARDS HERO 9 (C) B Pearce 6-8-11 ... Martin Dwyer 11
12 5-63 SANTARENE 10 P Howling 4-8-8 ... J Quinn 10
13 06-4 SHUTTLECOCK 6 (S) D Chapman 8-8-6 ... L Charnock 5
14 05-5 ALWENA 10 (V) S C Williams 4-8-6 ... A Clark 13
15 00-6 SIDNEY THE KIDNEY 12 M Ryan 5-8-4 ... Dale Gibson 8
16 400- PARONOMASIA 83J (B) J L Harris 7-7-12 ... P Fessey 14

7-2 Latin Bay, 9-2 Maradi, 6-1 Santarene, 8-1 Muhandis, 12-1 Memory's Music, Coastguards Hero, Shuttlecock, 14-1 others.

2.00 PENNY WISE STAKES (£2,785: 1m) (12)

1 /00- BOSTING PRIDE 278 (G) C Dondi (Bel) 7-9-12 ... P Roberts (3) 1
2 23-5 NIGHT CITY 12 (C,D,F,G,S) K Burke 8-9-12 ... D Sweeney 4
3 03-3 DIONYS 12 C Dondi (Bel) 5-9-2 ... J Bosley (7) 11
4 10-2 SPEEDY CLASSIC 9 (CD,F) M Heaton-Ellis 10-9-2 ... A Clark 8
5 500- POLY BLUE 75 (F) Miss G Kelleway 4-8-11 ... W Ryan 3
6 400- MISMEWMEW 48 (B) L A Dace 4-8-7 ... T G McLaughlin 7
7 d405- DANDY REGENT 15 (S) J L Harris 5-8-4 ... J Quinn 12
8 5-05 JUSTINIANUS 7 (C,G) J Bridger 7-8-4 ... G Bardwell 2
9 304- MR ROUGH 51 (B,D,F,S) D Morris 8-8-4 ... N Day 9
10 030- SOAKING 26 (CD,F) P Burgoyne 9-8-4 ... J Tate 5
11 00-0 PLEIN GAZ 12 (C,S) R O'Sullivan 6-8-2 ... Sophie Mitchell 6
12 000- WILL TO WIN 19 T Keddy 5-7-13 ... P Fessey 10

9-4 Speedy Classic, 3-1 Night City, 6-1 Soaking, 7-1 Poly Blue, 8-1 Mr Rough, 16-1 Dionys, Dandy Regent, 20-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: P Haslam, 23 winners from 108 runners, 21.3%, M Prescott, 17 from 95, 17.9%; V Soane, 7 from 40, 17.5%, D Chapman 17 from 99, 17.2%; M Johnston, 45 from 262, 17.2%

JOCKEYS: P Roberts, 10 winners from 42 rides, 23.8%; D McKeown, 27 from 147, 18.4%; P Fredericks, 6 from 35, 17.1%, W Ryan, 41 from 249, 16.5%; R Cochrane, 52 from 327, 15.9%

2.30 LINGFIELD RACECOURSE & STATION HANDICAP (Div II: £1,688: 2m) (10)

1 6/0- RED RAJA 17J P Mitchell 6-9-10 ... W Ryan 4
2 502- PADAUK 15 (B) M Haynes 5-9-6 ... F Norton 2
3 51-2 COLERIDGE 8 (B,CD,F,G,S) J Sheehan 11-9-5 ... J Wilson (7) 5
4 12-2 PERTEMPS MISSION 6 (V,BF,D,F) J Pearce 5-9-3 ... R Price 1
5 /0/0 NORTHERN VILLAGE 5 L A Dace 12-9-0 ... T G McLaughlin 3
6 002- KPOLO 31J B Johnson 4-8-7 ... J Quinn 9
7 00-0 TAZKIYA 7 R Ingram 4-8-5 ... G Bardwell 10
8 14-2 SWEET SERENATA 5 (F) S C Williams 4-8-5 ... P Doe (5) 7
9 500/ CHINA MAIL 394J M Quinn 7-8-2 ... C Rutter 6
10 400- ROYAL CIRCUS 29 (C,F,S) P Hiatt 10-7-10 ... Joanna Badger (7) 8

9-4 Padauk, 11-4 Coleridge, 9-2 Sweet Serenata, 5-1 Pertemps Mission, 10-1 Kpolo, 12-1 Red Raja, 25-1 Northern Village, Tazkiya, 33-1 others.

3.00 APPLE A DAY HANDICAP
(£2,722: 6f) (14)

1 23-1 AJNAD 7 (CD) R Marvin 5-10-1 (6ex) ... S Righton (7) 12
2 1-13 MUKARRAB 5 (BF,CD,G) D Chapman 5-9-12 ... A Culhane 5
3 00-6 SCISSOR RIDGE 12 (CD,F) J Bridger 7-9-11 ... G Bardwell 13
4 02-4 MUTASAWWAR 8 (CD,S) M Saunders 5-9-8 ... A Clark 6
5 0-31 ACID TEST 12 (CD,F) M A Buckley 4-9-8 ... R FitzPatrick (5) 3
6 00-0 PAGEBOY 13 (B,BF,CD,F) P Haslam 10-9-7 ... L Charnock 11
7 02-2 OK JOHN 12 J Akehurst 4-9-4 ... J Quinn 4
8 /4-4 FREDERICK JAMES 12 H Haynes 5-9-2 ... A Eddery (5) 1
9 2-34 FRIENDLY BRAVE 9 (B,C,D,F,S) Miss G Kelleway 9-9-2 ... P Fredericks (7) 6
10 000- AFTER EIGHT 19 (B,CD) M Saunders 4-9-1 ... P Doe (5) 7
11 441- MIKE'S DOUBLE 19 (V,D,G) Mrs N Macauley 5-9-1 ... R Price 14
12 5-31 INTIAASH 10 (C,D,F,S) D Haydn Jones 7-9-1 (6ex) ... S Whitworth 8
13 000- POLISH LEGION 108 (F) J Akehurst 6-8-13 ... Dane O'Neill 10
14 32-0 BARITONE 10 (V) S Kettlewell 5-8-9 ... T Sprake 2

9-2 Mutasawwar, 11-2 Ok John, 13-2 Acid Test, 7-1 Mike's Double, 8-1 Ajnad, Mutasawwar, Intiaash, 10-1 others

3.35 WEDDINGS AT LINGFIELD MAIDEN STAKES
(£3,649: 1m 2f) (11)

1 4 SEVEN O SEVEN 8 P Cundell 6-9-2 ... S Whitworth 9
2 40-0 FESTIVAL FLYER 9 Miss G Kelleway 4-9-0 ... W Ryan 5
3 004- FUEGIAN 15 M Madgwick 4-9-0 ... P Doe (5) 7
4 504- MERRY PRINCE 24 P Hedger 4-9-0 ... Dane O'Neill 1
5 232- NAKED OAT 19 B Smart 4-9-0 ... R Perham 10
6 036- RUSHED 16 G Enright 4-9-0 ... P Fessey 8
7 224- SHOGUN 145 K Burke 4-9-0 ... D Sweeney 6
8 0-0 TOREERO 8 B Curley 4-9-0 ... J Quinn 11
9 003- ZAHA 174 J Pearce 4-9-0 ... R Price 2
10 /45- BOLD BECKY 19 A P Jones 5-8-11 ... T Sprake 3
11 3/0- LIBERTE BELL 19 D Haydn Jones 4-8-9 ... F Norton 4

2-1 Shogun, 11-2 Naked Oat, 6-1 Zaha, 7-1 Seven O Seven, Festival Flyer, 10-1 Toreero, 14-1 Bold Becky, 16-1 others.

4.05 FRIEND IN NEED HANDICAP
(£2,697: 7f) (14)

1 025- HYDE PARK 51 (C,G) M Prescott 5-9-11 ... C Nutter 12
2 14-6 SHADES OF LOVE 12 (CD) V Soane 5-9-9 ... R Cochrane 7
3 6-13 JOHN BOWDLER MUSIC 6 (BF,C) M Johnston 4-9-8 ... J Fanning 13
4 00-0 PERICLES 12 (B,D,G,S) Miss G Kelleway 5-9-8 ... P Fredericks (7) 14
5 53-4 PRIMORDIAL 13 S Dow 4-9-4 ... P Doe (5) 6
6 42-3 AJIG DANCER 9 M Channon 4-9-1 ... D Smith (3) 5
7 34-5 COMEOUTOFTHEFOG 13 (CD) A McNae 4-8-13 ... T Sprake 8
8 30-0 ABTAAL 12 (V,D,F,G) Mrs N Macauley 9-8-5 ... P McCabe 2
9 046- MUSTANG 55 (V,CD) J Pearce 6-8-4 ... Dale Gibson 1
10 03-5 SIZZLING 12 (F) R Hannon 7-8-3 ... L Charnock 4
11 100- SUITE FACTORS 70 (D,F,S) K Burke 5-8-0 ... J Quinn 3
12 4-53 PRESENT 'N CORRECT 8 (CD,F) J Bradley 6-7-10 ... A Polli (3) 10
13 60-6 ASTRAL INVADER 8 (B,D,F,S) M Saunders 7-7-10 ... P Fessey 9
14 00-2 CLONOE 9 (F,S) R Ingram 5-7-10 ... G Bardwell 11

9-2 Shades Of Love, 5-1 John Bowdler Music, 6-1 Hyde Park, Ajig Dancer, 8-1 Comeoutofthefog, 10-1 Sizzling, 12-1 Clonoe, 14-1 others.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Kempton Park

Going: soft, heavy patches

1.15 (2m 5f hdle) 1, **Magic Combination** (J P Spencer, 11-2); 2, Norlandic (7-2 fav); 3, Another Chancer (14-1). 12 ran. NR: Charlie Banker. 15l, dist. B Curley. Tote: £7.80; £4.00, £1.70, £3.10. DF: £19.40. CSF: £22.75. Tricast: £235.55.

1.50 (2m hdle) 1, **Scarlet Pimpernel** (C Llewellyn, 3-1); 2, Nuvellino (9-2); 3, Masamadas (7-2). Wave Rock (4th) 11-4 fav. 10 ran. NR: River Beat. 5l, 12l. N Twiston-Davies. Tote: £4.00; £2.00, £2.90, £1.90. DF: £13.90. CSF: £15.37.

2.20 (2m ch) 1, **Buckland Lad** (B Fenton, 11-4); 2, Morstock (7-2); 3, Quango (11-2). Robins Pride (4th) 5-2 fav. 5 ran. NR: Native Charm. 5l, 6l. D Grissell. Tote: £4.20; £1.30, £2.40. DF: £6.50. CSF: £11.54.

2.55 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, **Atavistic** (R Widger, 12-1); 2, Smith Too (16-1); 3, Wontcostalotbut (14-1); 4, Arctic Chanter (7-2 fav). 17 ran. NR: Lansdowne. 3½l, 7l. P Hobbs. Tote: £14.00; £3.90, £5.00, £2.50, £1.70. DF: £218.40. Tote Trifecta: £6,224.00 - part won (pool of £7,977.29 carried forward to 3.45 Wincanton today). CSF: £177.26. Tricast: £2,514.10.

3.25 (3m ch) 1, **King Lucifer** (A Maguire, 13-8 fav); 2, Executive King (7-4); 3, Bank Avenue (4-1). 4 ran. 8l, dist. D Nicholson. Tote: £2.60. DF: £1.60. CSF: £4.50.

4.00 (2m hdle) 1, **Davoski** (R Dunwoody, 11-4); 2, Magic Circle (5-4 fav); 3, Lawahik (9-2). 15 ran. NR: Fern's Governor, Young Mazaad. 10l, 4l. Miss Venetia Williams. Tote: £3.50; £1.30, £1.40, £1.90. DF: £3.80. CSF: £6.07.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £4,693.50 carried forward to Wincanton today).

Placepot: £166.60.

Quadpot: £17.90.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: MALWOOD CASTLE
(2.10 Wincanton)

Malwood Castle, who goes well fresh and is proven in the mud, is still fairly handicapped and can enhance Robert Alner's good record at the Somerset track.

Next best: Grate British
(4.15 Wincanton)

Wolverhampton

1.00 (1m 100yd) 1, **Monchanin** (Dane O'Neill, 4-1); 2, Doberman (9-2); 3, Two On The Bridge (5-1). Rottey Spinney (6th) 6-2 fav. 8 ran. 2½l, 3½l. J Spearing. Tote: £5.90; £1.30, £1.40, £2.10. DF: £9.60. CSF: £21.04. There was no bid for the winner.

1.30 (5f) 1, **Tinker's Surprise** (J Edmunds, 6-1); 2, Sotonian (7-2 fav); 3, Maneamia (8-1). 12 ran. 1l, 2l. J Balding. Tote: £6.90; £2.10, £1.50, £4.70. DF: £14.40. CSF: £22.58. Tricast: £153.84.

2.00 (6f) 1, **Polar Mist** (Dean McKeown, 9-4); 2, Ice Age (9-4); 3, Sue Me (11-10 fav). 4 ran. 5l, ¾l. Mrs N Macauley. Tote: £3.30. DF: £2.00. CSF: £6.99.

2.35 (6f) 1, **Avenging Angel** (T Sprake, 7-1); 2, Muddy Water (25-1); 3, Red Venus (7-1). La Piazza 6-5 fav. 12 ran. 8l, 3l. N Littmoden. Tote: £8.10; £1.60, £2.20, £1.40. DF: £124.10. CSF: £158.89.

3.05 (1m 1f 79yd) 1, **Pas de Memoires** (Dean McKeown, 12-1); 2, Jibereen (7-1); 3, Be Warned (3-1 jt-fav). Holy Smoke 3-1 jt-fav. 10 ran. 1l, 1½l. K Burke. Tote: £12.40; £7.70, £3.50, £1.30. DF: £72.70. CSF: £88.35. Tricast: £295.13.

3.40 (1m 100yd) 1, **Burning** (D Sweeney, evens fav); 2, Landofun (7-2); 3, Casals (50-1). 8 ran. ½l, 11l. N Littmoden. Tote: £1.70; £1.60, £1.40, £1.50. DF: £3.50. CSF: £3.94. There was no bid for the winner.

4.10 (1m 6f 166yd) 1, **Sudest** (S Whitworth, 4-6 fav); 2, Premier Dance (25-1); 3, Evezio Rufo (5-1). 6 ran. 4l, nk. I Balding. Tote: £1.50; £1.70, £7.20. DF: £35.10. CSF: £19.63.

Placepot: £140.00.

Quadpot: £39.60.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WILSON

Wilson: his record time against the Gazelle Boy is a long way from being eclipsed today

Phenomenal pen that rewrote the record books

The sporting world's two greatest athletes are sensationally found to have been related all along



Tupper: modest background and scourge of the toffee-noses of Oxford and Cambridge

Today we unmask one of the greatest unsung heroes in the history of British sport. He is the man who lit the flame of athletic ambition for thousands of schoolboy with dreams of being champions by bringing them the adventures of an outrageous sportsman, record-breaker and role model.

Week after week for years he chronicled the exploits of the mysterious Wilson of the Wizard, regarded by many as the undisputed champion of comic book supermen.

A couple of weeks ago I wrote about the great Wilson after rediscovering a battered old copy of a book entitled *The Truth About Wilson* by W.S.K. Webb. I revealed that William Wilson may well still be alive at the age of 203, but that many of his astonishing world records set in the 1940s and 50s have been matched or overtaken by today's real-life athletes.

This provoked a torrent of response from *Times* readers, some of them very distinguished and a lot of them no longer in the full flush of spike-clattering youth, who were quick to defend Wilson's formidable reputation.

"What about his three minute mile?" asked a very senior member of Jesus College Oxford. "Have you forgotten his race against the Gazelle Boy?" protested a Wilson-disciple from Leominster. "Against the Gazelle Boy he clocked 100 metres in 4.7 secs. It's all there in the 'Has Wilson Come Back?' series."

Among the many communications from Wilson buffs was one from Ian R. Smith of the Association of Track and Field Statisticians and a former deputy editor of *The Guinness Book of Records*. He is the man who can tell us the truth not just about the strange fictitious athlete, but also about the mysterious W.S.K. Webb, who brought his adventures to the world.

Webb, he informs us, was the pen-name of Gilbert Lawford Dawson, a jobbing journalist turned author, born in Leominster in 1903. The Amazing Dalton, who would send off his stories a dozen at a time to his publishers, D.C. Thomson in Dundee, turns out to be almost as astonishing as The Great Wilson himself.

His output was prodigious. "In a six-week period in 1949, for instance," Ian Smith said, "Dalton wrote 316,000 words of serial fiction, one novel of 80,000 words, and three episodes of a radio serial — some 400,000 words in all. He never, as far as I can find, corrected or rewrote a word." Smith added; "and sometimes he would keep six or seven serial stories going at the same time. A single story, by the way, for say *The Wizard*, averaged 5,000 words. Dalton is on record as having completed one such in two hours and twenty minutes."

The stories may have been churned out at a record-breaking pace, but they had a grip on the imagination of many thousands of schoolboys. In 1948, for instance, despite the problems of wartime paper rationing and distribution, sales of *The Wizard*, complete with the latest exploits of Wilson, reached around 250,000 every other week — accounting for 6.5 million for the year.

When you consider how the comic would have been passed on from hand to grubby hand, the impact on a generation of young readers is enormous.

The true legacy of Wilson and Dalton, his creator, could be seen in the packs of boys who would try out their plimsolls and their dreams on the cinder tracks of the land. In terms of an athletic role model there was only one man who could rival the appeal of Wilson — and that was that other great fictional hero, Alf Tupper, the "Tough of the Track".

Many young athletes, including one of Britain's finest marathon runners, Ron Hill, modelled themselves on Tupper. "He was the sort of character I could admire," Hill said, "an underprivileged lad who could always beat the toffee-noses from Oxford and Cambridge. He was always up against it, and he rose above it."

Rival fans of Wilson and Tupper would speculate endlessly over which of them might win in a head-to-head. And it is in this matter that Ian Smith reveals the most surprising secret of all: the adventures of both of these phenomenal athletes came from the same pen. The Great Dalton was the author behind them both. With both the Great Wilson and Alf Tupper in his stable, Dalton's record at having inspired young athletes must be as great as any gold medal-winning champion, and yet he was never a great sportsman himself. "He was lean and 6ft 1in," Smith said, "an athletic figure, but not an athlete.

There is a rumour that Dalton once penned a story putting Wilson and Tupper in the same race. Tupper, so the rumour goes, came second. The Millennium must be the time for a rematch. The venue should be the Dome.

Rivals could argue for years about the result, for sadly the man who gave life to both Tupper and Wilson died in 1963. But sport would have been poorer without the unforgettable achievements of the Great Gilbert Lawford Dalton.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Defeated Prince is king for a frame

SNOOKER: Jason Prince, the world No 39, from Northern Ireland, became only the fifth player to compile a maximum 147 break in professional competition and lose his match when he was beaten 5-4 by Ian Brumby, of Liverpool, in the final qualifying round of the British Open at Blackpool yesterday (Phil Yates writes).

RUGBY LEAGUE: Salford Reds made their tenth signing of the close-season when Neil Baynes, 21, a prop forward who found first-team opportunities limited at Wigan Warriors, agreed a two-year contract yesterday (Christopher Irvine writes).

CRICKET: The venues of the first two Test matches on the Pakistan tour of India, which is under threat of disruption by Hindu right-wing activists, have been swapped. Madras hosts the opening Test from January 28 and Delhi the second, from February 4.

RUGBY UNION: Gloucester have arranged their home Tetley's Bitter Cup match with Henley, surprise conquerors of Bedford, for Saturday, January 30 to avoid a clash with neighbours Lydney, whose game with Saracens, the holders, takes place the next day.

CYCLING: Richard Virenque, who had announced his retirement after the disrupted Tour of France last year, will race for Polti, the Italian professional team, in the new season. Virenque was the leading competitor in the Festina team that was thrown out of the Tour for allegedly using banned substances.

FOOTBALL: Sydney's Olympic Stadium for the 2000 Games will be inaugurated on June 12 with a match between Australia and a Rest of the World XI.

TENNIS



Graf wins first leg of Williams challenge

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN SYDNEY

THOSE still unmoved by the women's game would have left the splendidly ageing White City complex here yesterday with food for thought after watching Steffi Graf douse Serena Williams's rampant ambition in their second round match in the Sydney International tournament.

From the bowels of a site on the verge of retirement, Graf sent out the message that she still has plenty to offer. The German, 29, last played here 15 years ago, when Williams's sole fashion accessory would have been a nappy, and by the way she emerged victorious from an unrelenting duel, announced herself as a leading force for the Australian Open next week.

Graf, having beaten Serena, 17, the younger of the Williams sisters by 6-2, 3-6, 7-5, next has to face up to Venus Williams. Whether she harbours enough resilience this early in the season to complete the family double must be open to some doubt, but Graf showed enough to worry her contemporaries when the curtain rises in Melbourne on Monday.

The outcome was in the balance for every one of the 148 minutes that Graf and Williams locked horns. The standard rarely reached exalted heights until the deciding set, when both women struck the ball with unbridled ferocity.

Where Graf represents grace, Williams sports a physique to match that of Denise Lewis, the British heptathlete. Her raw power caused Graf endless problems, although the German's greater control stood her in good stead on many crucial points.

Williams had every incentive to topple her opponent, for 1998 had failed to bring her the expected rewards. She was plainly primed for a flying start, which made Graf's determination — in temperatures rising to 37C — all the more admirable for this was only her second match of the season.

While Graf is tuning herself to concert pitch, Lindsay Davenport, the world No 1, looked some way adrift of it as she laboured to overcome Mary Joe Fernandez 6-4, 7-6. Davenport, who trailed 4-0 and 40-0 before capturing the opening set, was unable to assert herself against her American compatriot. She was fortunate indeed that Fernandez did not force a third set for, on set point in the tie-break, Fernandez's backhand drive only narrowly missed the line.

Equally ominous for Davenport has been the sight of a revitalised Martina Hingis, whom Davenport deposed from the No 1 spot at the US Open in August. The reverse has had a positive effect on Hingis, the Australian Open champion, who has evidently shrugged off the complacency that undermined her last year. "Going down to No 2 has probably helped her to focus again," Davenport ventured of her rival. "She is very hungry and more aggressive on the court. When she is like that she is very hard to beat."

Quite what motivates Anna Kournikova is anyone's guess. The Russian, who served one game full of double-faults among a near-implausible total of 16, again succumbed tamely, this time to Dominique van Roost, 6-1, 6-2.

In her past five matches, Kournikova has now dished up a mind-boggling 93 double-faults. Curiously, her rapid decline dates back to the occasion, in October, when she lent her name to a series of coaching articles in a German magazine — on how to serve.

One cannot help but bemoan the fact that Britain has no budding talent like Lleyton Hewitt, of Australia, who followed up his first-round defeat of Pat Rafter by downing Nicolas Kiefer, of Germany, for the second time in a week.

Hewitt, 17, who burst into prominence when winning in Adelaide 12 months ago, overcoming Andre Agassi en route, "is far from the the finished article but his positive attitude shamed Kiefer.

Richard Krajicek, of Holland, gave way to self-admonishment after losing to Jason Stoltenberg, of Australia. Krajicek, among the favourites for the Australian Open, expected a stronger showing despite his lack of conditioning after knee surgery seven weeks ago.

"I could have got much more out of that match," Krajicek said. "I was happy with some points, but I need to find greater consistency." With Marcelo Rios suffering from a hamstring strain and Pete Sampras missing the Australian Open, Krajicek must have fancied his chances of having a successful tournament in Melbourne, but his forlorn expression spoke volumes of his disappointment at failing to find his touch.

Tim Henman, another with much to gain from the tribulations afflicting Sampras and Rios, yesterday succumbed to Mark Philippoussis, of Australia, in his opening match at the Colonial Classic, an eight-man exhibition event in Melbourne. Philippoussis, who ousted Henman from the US Open in September, rallied from dropping the opening set to prevail 2-6, 6-4, 6-4.



A fired-up Graf left no doubt about how highly she valued her win over Serena Williams

SAILING

Ainslie puts seal on Laser superiority

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

BEN AINSLIE yesterday concluded a remarkable season in Lasers by carrying off his first world title in the class with a race to spare at the world sailing championships in Melbourne. His resounding win follows victories over the past 12 months at Kiel Week, in the British national championships, and his second title at the European championships.

Ainslie, the world No 1 in Lasers, who also won the ISAF single-handed world sailing championship in Dubai last March, has been thwarted twice in his attempts to win the Laser class world championships by Robert Scheidt. The Brazilian former world No 1 also beat him at the Atlanta Olympics to take gold to Ainslie's silver. But Ainslie, 22, has since overcome his old rival on at least five occasions and he has now proved he can do it at the class world championships.

In a typically consistent series, Ainslie, from Lymington in Hampshire, scored six wins, a second and two thirds in 11 starts. His worst finish was an eleventh place in his penultimate counting race. Scheidt finished second overall, with Karl Sunesson, of Sweden, third. Andrew Simpson, of Great Britain, sailed the regatta of his life to finish fifth.

Ainslie needed to finish three places above Scheidt to secure the title in the first race yesterday. In a freshening breeze, this was not easy, especially as the Brazilian rounded the first mark well ahead, with Ainslie seventeenth.

"It was quite windy, but some of the people up front weren't heavy-air specialists and I had better speed, which allowed me to get up to third by the finish," Ainslie said. "It has been a dream for quite a while to win the Laser worlds and it's been a hard battle."

Ainslie's win and his consistent race-winning form in Melbourne is all the more impressive for having been achieved in varied conditions, ranging from more than 25 knots to very light and fickle breezes. His weakness in heavier conditions is a thing of the past as he continues his preparations for the Sydney Olympics next year.



Ainslie: dream result

Ainslie's victory earned praise from John Derbyshire, the Royal Yachting Association Olympic manager, who was able to celebrate Britain's first world championship in an Olympic class since Stuart Childerly and crew won the Soling world match racing championship in 1995. "Simply brilliant," he said. "It was a faultless performance by a true champion."

Much of the credit for Ainslie's success must go to the guiding hand of his father, Roddy, and the joint decision he took with his son for Ainslie to stay in Lasers after Atlanta. Father and son realised that to have branched out might have affected the intensity of focus Ainslie has demonstrated over the past three years in the highly competitive and tactically challenging international Laser fleet.

Elsewhere in Melbourne, in the 49er world championships, four British pairings go into the last 12 races in the elite or "gold" fleet, with Tim Robinson and Ian Walker leading the way in tenth place overall. In blowy conditions yesterday, Robinson and Walker recorded a fifth and a seventh to add to seven previous top-five finishes.

"The racing has been very tight as always and we have surprised ourselves at how easily we have made the cut," Walker said. "We are yet to capsize, somehow."

Sleepless Anderson gives Wood wake-up

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

BOWLS

WILLIE WOOD, who lost in the final of the world indoor singles championship ten years ago, was defeated in the preliminary round of the 1999 event at Potters Leisure Resort in Norfolk yesterday by Steve Anderson, from Australia, 7-4, 7-4, 1-7, 1-7, 7-5.

Anderson, who has been sampling the delights of the resort well into the early hours of the morning, revealed that he has also been getting up early to practise. "I believe players in tournaments like this have a duty to mix with the locals, and the late nights have helped me relax," he said.

Anderson surprised Wood when he won the first two sets, but the wily Scot looked the winner when he won the next two at a canter. But the Australian found a second wind and sailed into the first round.

Wood felt that he lost the game in the second set, when, after opening with a full house, he allowed Anderson to score seven shots in a row.

Wood found himself five down after three ends of the decider, but was level at 5-5 three ends later.

Dropping a single on the next end, Wood should have taken advantage of a lapse on the following end from Anderson, whose nearest bowl was almost a yard from the jack. Wood's first three bowls were so far away that he forsook the draw, and decided to fire with his last bowl, in an attempt to ditch the jack. "I'm normally pretty good at the drive," he said. "I had the best back bowl, and realised I had a chance to win the game, but I was off target. It was very disappointing, because it was a match I should have won."

Griff Sanders, whose appeal against a ten-year ban from Devon's outdoor greens comes up at Worthing tomorrow, has failed to force his way into England's indoor side for the international series in Bournemouth in March, despite playing well in the trials last weekend. The selectors have dropped two stalwarts from Norfolk, David Ward, who made his international debut in 1983, and John Ottaway, who has been a regular at lead since 1985.

In an attempt to turn the tide after eight dismal years, they have introduced four new caps, Les Gillett, Tim Houghton, Mark Royal and Mark Smith, and recalled three former internationals, Stuart Airey, Danny Denison and Mervyn King.

Gillett, who won the International Open in 1997, was named as reserve last year, but created a record during the summer when he qualified for the national championships in all four events and played in 21 out of a possible 24 sessions over 11 days.

ENGLAND SQUAD: Rink 1: J Rednall (Ipswich), W Jackson (Dunholme), S Warren (Swindon Westlecot), D J Cutler (Teignbridge). Rink 2: * M Royal (Mid Suffolk), * L Gillett (Chipping Norton), J Learmen (Stanley), A E Thomson (Cyphers). Rink 3: * M Smith (West Row), R Sampson (Whiteknights), + M King (Pinewood Park), G Harlow (City of Ely). Rink 4: M Bantock (Whiteknights), R Newman (Whiteknights), I Bond (Exonia), T Allcock (Perdiswell). Rink 5: * T Houghton (Blackpool Borough), C Palmer (Stanley), D Holt (Blackpool Borough), G R Smith (Sunderland). Rink 6: N Cammack (Nottingham), + S Airey (Cumbria), B Morley (Nottingham), + D Denison (Torquay United). Reserves: P Ward (Atherley), B Jenkins (Egham).

* denotes new cap, + denotes recall

Pirie excels in parallel career

BY A CORRESPONDENT

SKIING

SKIERS from the United States took the first three placings in the international parallel slalom, the only event to be run at the British Land national championships in Tignes, France, yesterday, as strong winds and yet more driving snow put paid to the junior downhill race.

British hopes succumbed to the strength and depth of the American challenge, only five British skiers reaching the second round. Green, the defending champion, fell to Jesse Maddex, the eventual winner.

Sean Langmuir, the British Land alpine team coach, lost to Werner Herzog, another British-team trainer, in the quarter-finals. Herzog, an Austrian, is the former world professional parallel slalom champion.

In the best-of-three-races final between Maddex and Marco Sullivan, the winner of the international downhill on Tuesday, Maddex won twice in a row, with superior starts and better speed in the second half of each course.

Racing head-to-head down two fast, fairly straight, identical 13-gate parallel courses has been a popular event at these championships for five years, and is now being considered by the International Ski Federation for inclusion on the World Cup circuit.

It was left to Tessa Pirie, 20, the national downhill title holder, to uphold British pride, in the women's section. She took Treza Tritikova, of the Czech Republic, to a third race and lost by centimetres. "My third start was not great and I just couldn't get back from there," Pirie said. Chimene Alcott, the 16-year-old British junior champion, took third place.

Pirie starts as favourite in both of today's races — the junior downhill and the super-G. She will also be a key player in Britain's quest to win the international team parallel slalom.



RUGBY UNION

Bristol face rival bid in battle for London Scottish

By Mark Souster

AS THE proposed takeover of London Scottish by Bristol ran into further obstacles yesterday, it emerged that a consortium of four prominent Scottish businessmen was preparing to make a rival bid. London Scottish's 500 season ticket-holders are ready to issue an injunction claiming breach of contract if Tony Tiarks sells the club, for a reported figure of £1 million, while supporters say they intend to stage a protest at half-time of the game away to Leicester on Saturday.

It is understood any merger could contravene Rugby Football Union (RFU) and possibly International Board regulations, while English First-Division Rugby (EFDR) is concerned that the timing of the deal, in mid-season, sets a dangerous and complicated precedent. Bristol are acting to try to ensure they cannot be excluded from any Anglo-Welsh League next season, but a further problem concerns television coverage. BSkyB is worried that any Anglo-Welsh League would compromise their exclusive coverage of English club rugby as Cardiff and Swansea would be tied to the contract the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) has with S4C.

In the light of all the difficulties, the RFU is thought to be rethinking the wisdom of such a competition. One well-placed RFU member said: "Cardiff and Swansea are the only ones who would benefit from this. We are just tearing ourselves apart. The time is fast approaching when we should just concentrate on the Allied Dunbar Premiership. That would solve all the problems overnight." Brian Baister, the RFU chairman, is believed to be meeting the WRU today, reportedly ready to insist that Wales could only have six clubs involved in an Anglo-Welsh competition.

Final details of the proposed London Scottish takeover have not been revealed, leaving the authorities unsure on what grounds objections could be raised.

In broad terms however, EFDR's lawyers have advised the senior clubs that they could undermine the takeover by refusing to play league fixtures against Bristol. Howard Thomas, EFDR's chief executive, said: "Our big problem is the timing. If it happens in mid-season it opens up a can of worms. We also believe this would need English Rugby Partnership approval."

RFU regulations stipulate that no club can have more than a 25 per cent stake in another and that any intention to merge should be declared by May 1 of the preceding season. On that basis the takeover would appear to be doomed. Malcolm Pearce, the owner of Bristol, admitted yesterday that the proposed scenario was not his preferred option, but one that was necessary to safeguard the club's future.

"We will do this if we have to," Pearce said. "For some strange reason the RFU has allowed avaricious proprietors of clubs in Premiership One to conjure up, in a smoke-filled room, a new competition that excludes us. I can't sit back because I have a responsibility to the players of Bristol as well as our sponsors."

One of the London Scottish team, Ronnie Erikson, said: "As players, we don't know when we go to bed what the situation will be in the morning. We are very frustrated but are trying to carry on as normal."

Elaine Watterson, the chairman of the London Scottish Supporters' Association, said the planned protest at Welford Road had the full backing and co-operation of Leicester supporters. "We are disgusted by what is going on. Gobsmacked. We will make our feelings known on Saturday," she said.

☐ Bath moved to solve their scrum-half crisis yesterday by signing Andy Gomarsall on a month's loan from Wasps.

Ulster may play to capacity audience

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

ULSTER'S passionate supporters have the opportunity to set an attendance record when the final of the European Cup is held at Lansdowne Road on January 30. With enthusiasts from all over Ireland prepared to urge them on against Colomiers, the organisers hope for a capacity attendance of 49,000 that would surpass the 44,000 who watched Brive beat Leicester in Cardiff two years ago.

Tickets for the final will go on sale from today, but already Ulster have received 11,000 requests, after the win over Stade Français last Saturday that was watched by 20,000 at Ravenhill. The Irish Rugby Football Union agreed yesterday to the postponement of league matches on the day of the final, though they are unlikely to entertain the suggestion that Ballymena's and Dungannon's matches a week earlier also be postponed.

The Ulster management must hope, therefore, that none of their key players sustain injury between now and the end of the month. They can select only from players registered at the start of the season and though they have no prospect of Mark McCall or James Topping being able to play, there is optimism that Stanley McDowell, the centre, will have recovered.

The final, to be refereed by Clayton Thomas, of Wales, will also be the perfect stage for Ulster's international prospects to stake their claims, notably Simon Mason, Allen Clarke and Mark Blair.



BRUNO FABLET

Alfie Cox, of South Africa, rides his KTM in the Dakar Rally. He is in fourth place overall

Schlesser stages revival

By Our Sports Staff

JEAN-LOUIS Schlesser and Richard Sainct, of France, strengthened their overall lead in the Dakar Rally, in the car and motorcycle classes respectively, with impressive stage wins yesterday.

Schlesser had his Schlesser/Renault buggy stuck in the sand of Mauritania after 350km of the 490km twelfth stage from Nema to Tichit, but managed to get out quickly to clinch the section in 7hrs 9min 23sec. The Frenchman extended his overall lead to 20min 27sec over Miguel Prieto, of Spain, in a Mitsubishi.

Both drivers were involved in a collision after 170km, and although the Spaniard managed to keep going, Schlesser lost three minutes and damaged the vehicle he has designed himself.

"We were on parallel pistes which ran into a single track. We didn't see each other until the very last minute. It wasn't anybody's fault," Schlesser said. He speeded up after the incident to regain the lead and won the stage 11 minutes ahead of Prieto, who finished fourth.

In the motorcycle class, Sainct, riding a BMW, widened the overall gap to 2min 40 sec over Thierry Magnaldi, his compatriot, on a KTM.

Sainct said he had not pressed home his advantage after attacking 20km from the finish line because he wanted to avoid any unnecessary accidents. "Once I was in the lead I didn't want to push too hard because this race is like a game of poker and you don't show all your hand in one sweep," Sainct said.

John Deacon, of Great Britain, also riding a KTM, is in eighth place overall, 2hr 30min 49sec behind Sainct.

FOOTBALL

Pennock left with painful reminder

By Russell Kempson

IT WILL be shown time and again in the years to come. Goalkeeper gathers football, looks around for danger, throws ball forward and prepares to clear upfield. What happens next?

Tony Pennock will look away, the memory too painful to contemplate. It was the bizarre moment that Yeovil Town lost their FA Cup third-round replay against Cardiff City on Tuesday, the moment that will haunt Pennock for the remainder of his career.

"Tony is distraught," Colin Lippiatt, the Yeovil manager, said afterwards. "He has said sorry to his team-mates, but all their words of comfort are not enough. When he gets home, he might want to dig a deep hole for himself."

It had all gone so well at Huish Park, with Pennock playing his part with a series of agile saves. Yeovil, the Football Conference side and renowned Cup giant-killers, had matched Cardiff, the Nationwide League third division leaders, blow for blow.

Cardiff had gone ahead in the 42nd minute through Jeff Eckhardt, but Yeovil's late efforts were rewarded when Matt Hayfield drove home with five minutes remaining. Extra time loomed and a possible nineteenth Football League victim for Yeovil, the kings of the Cup upsets.

Yet barely had the extra period started than Pennock, 27, the former Stockport County, Wigan Athletic and Hereford United goalkeeper, had blundered. Kevin Nugent, who had scored Cardiff's equaliser in the first game at Ninian Park, spotted the loose ball and before Pennock could rectify his mistake, he had nipped in guide it into the empty net.

Cardiff heaved a collective sigh of relief — "I'm just glad to get through," Frank Burrows, their manager, said — and moved on to a fourth-round tie against Sheffield United or Notts County.

For Pennock, though, the agony will continue. He was born in Swansea and still lives in the city, where the natives despise all things Cardiff. It will not be easy to forgive him the error of his ways.

Celta offer Cruyff first-team chance

By Stephen Wood

ALEX FERGUSON, the Manchester United manager, has given his permission for Jordi Cruyff, the forward, to leave Old Trafford on loan, in the hope that he may revive his faltering career. Celta Vigo, the Spanish club, is understood to want to take Cruyff back to Spain, his country of birth, until the end of the season.

If Celta make a formal approach, Ferguson will let Cruyff go. "I am not very keen, but I do understand his position," Ferguson said. "He is in a dilemma and I can see why he would want to go and get first-team football somewhere. He is just playing reserve matches for us.

"As long as we can get him back on a recall basis, he can go. With the European Cup quarter-finals coming up and other commitments, I need to keep my squad intact." Cruyff, 24, joined United from Barcelona after appearing for Holland in the European championship of 1996, but he has started just 21 senior matches in his time at Old Trafford.



Cruyff: loan deal

United allowed another striker to go out on loan yesterday. Erik Nevland, the Norway Under-21 international, has joined IFK Gothenburg, of Sweden, for one season. He is contracted to United until the summer of 2001.

Peter Schmeichel, the United goalkeeper, could be rested for one more match in the FA Carling Premiership. Schmeichel missed the victory over West Ham United last Sunday, because he was on holiday and he may be left out of United's visit to Leicester City on Saturday.

BOXING: TITLE CHALLENGER BLAMES LOST ENTHUSIASM

Wharton walks away from the ring

By Our Sports Staff

HENRY WHARTON yesterday announced his retirement, less than a month before he was due to challenge for three titles. He told Gary Atkin, his trainer, that he had lost his enthusiasm for the sport.

Wharton, 31, from York, was to have boxed Crawford Ashley, of Leeds, at Halifax on February 6 with the European, British and Commonwealth light-heavyweight titles at stake.

The contest had been eagerly awaited and was to provide Wharton with another chance to move into contention for a world title after three unsuccessful attempts at wresting the world super-middleweight crown from Nigel Benn, Chris Eubank and Robin Reid.

Atkin said: "The strange thing about this is that he's never been in better shape. He's been quieter than normal but I put that down to the build-up. He could have beaten Crawford, but it's his career and nobody but Henry knows how he feels.

"He told me that his enthusiasm had gone, but at least he's been honest about it. He could have just taken the money and run." Atkin added that there was "not a chance" of Wharton reversing his decision.

Ashley will now defend his titles against Clinton Woods of Sheffield, the former Commonwealth super-middleweight champion.

While Wharton was announcing his departure from the ring, Steve Collins, the former World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight champion, confirmed that he is coming out of retirement to contest his long-awaited bout with Roy Jones, the World Boxing Council light heavyweight champion, on April 17.

The 35-year-old Irishman, who beat Eubank to take the title, then defended it successfully against both Eubank and Benn, always dreamt of fighting Jones, but retired 18 months ago after losing hope of ever facing the American.

Collins, who has spent his time since his retirement appearing in the film *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, and a video featuring the rock group, U2, is hoping the contest will take place in his home city of Dublin.

"The fight is on and if we can get it in Dublin that would be the icing on the cake," Collins said, "but I'll fight him in America if necessary."

Should the bout come to Dublin, Croke Park — the national Gaelic football stadium — is an option, with a crowd of 35,000 expected for what would be one of the highest-profile contests staged in the British Isles.

Collins, who retired with a record of 36 wins — including 21 knockouts — and three defeats, travelled to Pensacola, Florida last weekend, to see Jones, a week before his 30th birthday, dispense with 39-year-old policeman Ricky Frazier in two rounds in defence of his title.

Afterwards Jones, who has been beaten only once in 40 contests, with 33 knockouts, challenged Collins to face him in a duel that should bring them each a record purse.

FOR THE RECORD

BOWLS

HOPTON-ON-SEA, Norfolk: World indoor championships: Singles: First round: R Weale (Wales) bt D Le Marquand (Jer) 6-7, 7-0, 7-1, 0-7, 7-2; I Bond (Eng) bt J Wong (HK) 7-2, 7-0, 7-1; S Anderson (Aus), bt W Wood (Scot) 7-4, 7-4, 1-7, 1-7, 7-5.

ETON FIVES

IPSWICH TOURNAMENT: Semi-finals: S Cooley and D Cox bt J Caudle and J Nicholson 13-10, 14-11, 12-6, J Cameron and A Mann bt J Thompson and T Fletcher 12-8, 12-7. Final: Cooley and Cox bt Cameron and Mann 12-9, 12-6, 12-2. Plate A: Final: M Fenn and E Mockridge bt P Forrest and R Grainger 12-4, 15-11, 12-10. Plate B: Final: P Boughton and J Millington bt Thompson and A Kirk 12-3, 12-9, 12-7

FOOTBALL

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Postponed: Airdrie v Greenock Morton.
TENNENT'S SCOTTISH CUP: Second round: Postponed: Queen's Park v Clachnacuddin. Second-round replay: Postponed: Stirling v Montrose.

Tuesday's late results

FA CUP: Third-round replay: Yeovil 1 Cardiff 2 (aet, 1-1 after 90min. Cardiff away to Notts Co or Sheffield Utd in fourth round).
AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Northern section, second round: Darlington 0 Chesterfield 2.
SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First division: Hamilton 0 Clydebank 1.
CALOR COUNTY ANTRIM SHIELD: Semi-final: Linfield 1 Glentoran 2.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Thatcham 3 Hamble ASSC 0.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Queens Park Rangers 1 Bournemouth 1.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Fourth round: Crewe 0 Queens Park Rangers 1.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Tampa Bay 3 Toronto 4; Detroit 5 Montreal 1; Colorado 4 Chicago 1; Edmonton 2 Dallas 2 (OT).

MOTOR RALLYING

DAKAR RALLY: 12th stage (Nema to Tichit, 490km). Cars: 1, J-L Schlesser (Fr, Schlesser) 7hr 9min 23sec; 2, J-M Servia (Sp, Schlesser) at 3min 56sec; 3, K Shinozuka (Japan, Mitsubishi) 7 29. Leading overall positions: 1, Schlesser 55hr 27min 34sec, 2, M Prieto (Sp, Mitsubishi) at 20min 27sec; 3, J Kleinschmidt (Ger, Mitsubishi) 1:31 40. Motorcycles: 1, R Sainct (Fr, BMW) 8:36:11; 2, F Meoni (It, KTM) 1:44; 3, T Magnaldi (Fr, KTM) 2:40. Leading overall positions: 1, Sainct 45:04:17, 2, Magnaldi 4 41, 3, Meoni 17:51. British placing: 8, J Deacon (KTM) 2:30:49.

RUGBY UNION

WELSH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Pool A: Neath 18 Natal Wildebeest 38. Postponed: Caerphilly v Edinburgh Reivers. Pool B: Bridgend v Glasgow Caledonians.
SWALEC CUP: Fourth round: Group B: Cross Keys 25 Dunvant 14. Group L: Llandovery 22 Cardiff 40.

SAILING

MELBOURNE: World championships (after seventh day): President of the IOC Cup: 1, Great Britain 38pts; 2, Australia 32; 3, Sweden 27. Laser Gold fleet: Final overall positions (after 12 races, one discard): 1, B Ainslie 34pts; 2, R Scheidt (Br) 38; 3, K Sunesson (Swe) 48. Other British placing: 5, A Simpson 74. Europe (after six races, one discard): 1, S Mulsta (Fin) 8pts; 2, M Matthijssee (Holl) 9; 3, A Mason (NZ) 12. British placing: 4, S Robertson 13. Finn Gold Cup (after eight races, one discard): 1, M Kusznierewicz (Pol) 32pts; 2, F Loof (Swe) 44; 3, K Kuret (Cro) 50. British placing: 4, I Percy 53. 49er (after 11 races): 1, C Nicholson and E Smyth (Aus) 14pts; 2, A Beashel and T Czislowski (Aus) 19; 3, J and C McKee (US) 20. British placing: 10, T Robinson and I Walker 33. Soling (after four races): 1, S Westergaard, J Bojsen Moller and B Westergaard (Den) 14pts; 2, J Schuemann, G Bahr and I Borkowski (Ger) 24; 3, R Heiner, P van Niekerk and D de Ridder (Holl) 29. British placing: 7, A Beadsworth, R Sydenham and B Parkin 42. Men's 470 Gold fleet (after six races): 1, B Petit and J F Cuzon (Fr) 9; 2, E Braslavets and I Matvienko (Ukr) 24; 3, C Tomatz and M Mihs (Slovenia) 25. British placing: 22, N Rogers and J Glanfield 91.

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 2d (Galapagos to Hawaii; with miles to finish): 1, Ariel (A Thomson) 1,258, 2, Sence (R Dean) 1,321, 3, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 1,340; 4, Mermerus (B Sollars) 1,362, 5, Taeping (N Fleming) 1,417; 6, Thermopylae (M Tod) 1,498; 7, Antiope (K Harris) 1,525.

SKIING

TIGNES, France: British Land national championships: Parallel slalom: Men: 1, J Maddex (US); 2, M Sullivan (US); 3, B Fischer (US); 4, W Herzog (Austria). Women: 1, T Trilkova (Cz); 2, T Pire (Aberdeen); 3, C Alcott (Twickenham); 4, L Westmacott (Kingston).

SQUASH

RYE, New York: Apawamis Open: Men: Quarter-finals: D Ryan (Ire) bt N Taylor (Eng) 15-12, 15-5, 15-10; G Ryding (Can) bt T Hands (Eng) 14-15, 15-5, 15-7, 15-9; J Raumolin (Fin) bt D Forslund (Swe) 10-15, 15-12, 15-12, 14-15, 15-6; C Walker (Eng) bt A Hill (Aus) 11-15, 15-14, 15-2, 15-7. Semi-finals: Ryan bt Ryding 8-15, 15-8, 15-10, ret; Raumolin bt Walker 10-15, 9-15, 15-11, 15-14, 15-7. Final: Ryan bt Raumolin 15-9, 13-15, 15-5, 15-14. Women: Quarter-finals: S Wright (Eng) bt S Macfie (Scot) 6-9, 9-3, 9-3, 9-0; R Macree (Eng) bt J Tracker (Eng) 2-9, 9-2, 4-9, 9-3, 9-3, N Grainger (SA) bt J Tranfield (Eng) 9-1, 9-7, 9-5; L Charman (Eng) bt V Atkinson (Holl) 9-3, 9-0, 9-2. Semi-finals: Wright bt Macree 9-3, 9-5, 9-3; Charman bt Grainger 9-3, 9-7, 9-1. Final: Wright bt Charman 7-9, 9-3, 9-1, 9-0.
SRA NATIONAL LEAGUE: Group A: Manchester Northern 2 UNW Northumberland 3; TSM Duffield 2 Hallamshire 3. Group B: Ashurst Loughborough 1 Edgbaston Priory 4; Potters Bar 3 UK Packaging 2. Group C: Lee-on-Solent 1 Chichester 4, UWIC 2 UNIS Guildford 3

TENNIS

MELBOURNE: Colonial Classic: First round: A Agassi (US) bt P Korda (Cz) 6-2, 6-1; T Enqvist (Swe) bt G Ivanisevic (Cro) 7-6, 7-6, M Philippoussis (Aus) bt T Henman (GB) 2-6, 6-4, 6-4, M Chang (US) bt Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 6-7, 6-3, 7-5
SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT: Men: Second round: G Kuerten (Br) bt T Woodbridge (Aus) 6-4, 6-0; L Hewitt (Aus) bt N Kiefer (Ger) 6-4, 6-2; A Costa (Sp) bt J-M Gambill (US) 6-3, 7-5, A Corretja (Sp) bt M Rosset (Switz) 4-6, 6-3, 7-6; K Kucera (Slovakia) bt C Pioline (Fr) 6-4, 6-0; J Stoltenberg (Aus) bt R Krajicek (Holl) 6-3, 6-4; T Martin (US) bt M Puerta (Arg) 7-5, 6-4; T Muster (Austria) bt C Moyá (Sp) 7-6, 7-5. Women: Second round: V Williams (US) bt A Coetzer (SA) 7-6, 6-2; A Sánchez Vicario (Sp) bt A Huber (Ger) 2-6, 6-3, 6-2; S Graf (Ger) bt S Williams (US) 6-2, 3-6, 7-5; L Davenport (US) bt M J Fernandez (US) 6-4, 7-6; P Schnyder (Switz) bt K Habsudova (Slovakia) 6-4, 4-6, 6-4; D van Roost (Bel) bt A Kournikova (Russ) 6-1, 6-2.

POOLS DIVIDENDS

BRITTENS: Treble chance: 23pts £1,045.20, 22 £91 45, 21 £2.10. Four draws: £2.90. Five aways: £13.00. Eight homes: £9.00.
LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance: 23pts £89,870.40, 22 £748 10, 21 £49.90, 20 £9.30. Half-time: 23 £16,886 65. Four draws: £4.80. Nine homes: £185 75. Five aways: £2,981.00.
VERNONS: Treble chance: 22pts £4,845.80, 21 £37.25, 20 £6.80.
ZETTERS: Treble chance: 23pts £6,588.80, 22 £40 70; 21 £3.15, 20 £0.45. Four aways: £2.40. Eight homes: £2.00. Four draws: £3.70. All-draws treble chance: 24 £8.00. Lucky numbers: 24 34 33 9 10 35

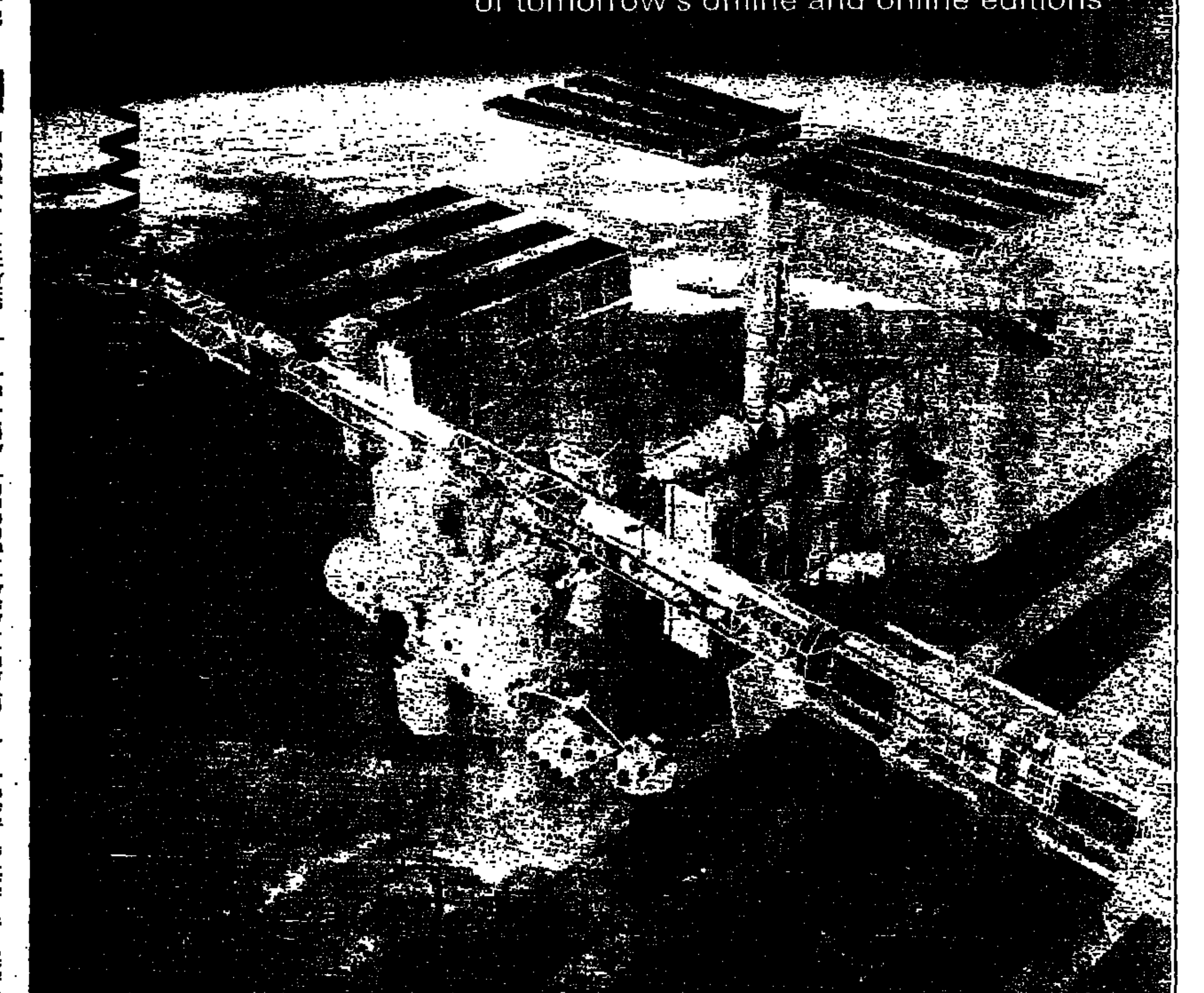
FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Emley v Frickley (7.30)
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Sunderland v Leeds (at Durham City, 7.0). League Cup: Group one: Newcastle v Middlesbrough (at Newcastle Rugby Club, 7.0). Group three: West Bromwich Albion v Manchester City (at Halesowen Town, 7.0).
SCHOOLS MATCH: Premier League Trophy: Under-18: Durham v Northumberland (at Ryhope CA, 7.0).

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Greater London Leopards v Derby Storm (7.30)
ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Cardiff Devils v Nottingham Panthers (7.30).



GOLF: EAGER BRITON STEALS A MARCH ON RIVALS IN EFFORT TO CLIMB RANKINGS

Faldo sets sights on revival

FROM JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN JOHANNESBURG

AT THE Houghton Golf Club on the high veld, the sun shines on the pale faces of those golfers who have flown in from colder climes. It is just past midsummer and the air is clear and dry and the clouds are high. They are almost as high, in fact, as the hopes of many of the players beginning the last season of the century on professional golf's European Tour.

The Alfred Dunhill SA PGA championship starts this morning, the first event in a season of great moment and change. It is not just Nick Faldo who says, as he did yesterday: "This is a big golf year. There has not been one like this for some time. I shall play about 27 events this year, whereas recently it has been down to 22."

Indeed, the hopes and fears for 1999 can best be expressed through the eyes of two men, one of whom is Faldo, who has returned to the country that he first visited as an amateur 24 years ago at the beginning of his attempt to climb back up the world rankings. The other is David Carter, who won his first tournament in Europe last season and then, when partnered by Faldo, captured the World Cup for England in New Zealand last November.

"I am here to get some golf in, to play for Ryder Cup points and world ranking points," Faldo said. He will play in Cape Town next week and Dubai next month before flying to the United States, intent on fashioning the improvement that he needs if he is to achieve his stated ambition of being a winner once again.

Perhaps plagued by off-course worries, which now seem to have been resolved, he has plummeted drastically since 1996, the year in which he won the Masters. At the end of 1996, he was ranked No 6 in the world. He fell to No 17 in 1997 and No 66 last November before finishing fourth in the Australian Open, a result that moved him up the list to No 57. "I have been told I'll be all right for the Andersen," Faldo said, referring to the elite matchplay event in February.

Carter, 26, is still suffering from pains in his left shoulder and arm, a reaction to years of bad posture. Yet, after his success with Faldo in Auckland and after his victory over Colin Montgomerie in a play-off for the Irish Open last year, he cannot wait to get started once again. He wants the improvement that he has shown in the European order of merit each year — from No 92 in 1995 to No 19 last year — to continue.

For Carter, this country is just like home. In fact, that is exactly what it is, although he lives in Surrey, looks and speaks like an Englishman and regards England as his home.

He was born and went to school in Johannesburg, grew up 20 minutes from Houghton and speaks Afrikaans.

If it is a big year for Faldo and Carter, a great player determined to recapture former glories and a rising star of the European Tour, which is starting, appropriately for a tour that knows no boundaries, in South Africa, then the same is true for Ernie Els. Els, who was married at the end of last year and spent his honeymoon careering around the west coast of this country in a four-wheel drive vehicle and sleeping under the stars, is anxious to rediscover his best form after a disappointing season.

To help, he has bought a house at Wentworth, begun back-strengthening exercises and slightly remodelled his swing. "Let's hope my golf has improved now I'm married." Els, who won an event on this course in 1992, said, grinning. "I have played twice since the wedding and I broke par both times, so that is encouraging."

In addition to the four major championships and an event such as the Players' Championship, which is a major championship in all but name, the 1999 golfing calendar contains a Walker Cup at Nairn at the beginning of September and a Ryder Cup in Boston, Massachusetts, at the end of the same month. Little can match the raw excitement generated by a team competition in an individual sport and the prospect of these two events within 14 days of one another is mouthwatering.

This is not all. In 1999, there is a milestone in professional golf. Three inaugural World Golf Championship (WGC) events are to be held — in California, in February, Ohio, in August, and Valderrama, Spain, in November. Prize-money totals $5 million at each, with a first prize of $1 million. They are the start of a world tour for the game's best players, who will eventually circle the globe playing against one another.

The event at La Costa near San Diego in February is matchplay for the top 64 golfers in the world rankings. The two others are strokeplay for fewer competitors. As prize-money counts both towards the Ryder Cup team and the Order of Merit, great efforts are being made by players to improve their world rankings while players who are nowhere near that level — men such as Severiano Ballesteros — continue to fulminate against the unfairness of it. What they say in essence is that the WGC seems to make sure that the rich get richer and richer. It is undeniable, but it is also life and one wonders whether Ballesteros would be saying the same sort of things if he were at his best?

PAUL SEVERN / ALLSPORT



Faldo hones his game yesterday during the pro-am that preceded the Alfred Dunhill SA PGA championship

MOTOR RALLYING

Ford lose their focus in water pump dispute

BY JEREMY HART

FORD face exclusion from the Monte Carlo rally, which starts on Sunday, and subsequent rounds of the 1999 world championship, after three Japanese rivals reversed an earlier decision to allow the new Martini Ford Focus to compete on its debut event with a non-standard water pump.

The three Japanese teams, Mitsubishi, Toyota and Subaru, represented under the banner of the Japanese Automobile Federation, yesterday overturned their previous agreement to let Colin McRae's radical new car start the season, once new information about Ford's strategy came to light.

"Having agreed last week we found out a few things that changed the situation," David Richards, whose Pro-Drive operation runs Subaru's rally team, said. "It transpires Ford weren't just looking for an exemption to run the water pump in Monte Carlo, but until they had got the technical specification legalised. That is unacceptable."

Other teams described Ford's attitude to preparing their new machine as arrogant and incompetent. The time had come, one said, for Ford to get their knuckles rapped for trying to compete with a car that uses non-standard parts.

"I am absolutely sure that mistakes have been made, but Ford cannot be accused of trying to pull the wool over the other team's eyes," Martin Whittaker, Ford's Director of European Motor Sport, said. "We told the other teams immediately that the simple fact is that the car cannot run with a standard water pump, so it is not just a case of starting Monte Carlo. Unless the regulations concerning water pumps are changed, and that's something I believe all the teams would benefit from, we cannot run. That is not only disastrous for Ford, but for the world rally championship."

Last week, aware that there was no time to legalise the water pump before Monte Carlo, Malcolm Wilson, Ford Rally team principal, began contacting the other teams to secure their support for special dispensation to run the possibly performance-enhancing part. Their support seems to have proved shortlived.

A senior source at the FIA, motor sport's world governing body, said: "As the car stands at the moment it is illegal. We would not be in a position to change the rules freeing the specification of water pumps unless all the other teams agreed. Even then, we would still need to examine the issue to consider allowing it to run."

Only Peugeot have supported the change in regulations. The support of other teams now seems highly unlikely before Sunday. "The rules have been tinkered with too many times. Now is time for some consistency in the sport," one team spokesman said.

The Ford team had secured the services of Colin McRae, for £6 million, but they had announced a substantial sponsorship deal with Martini Racing. "I have been assured that the car will run," McRae said.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 42

ABAND
(b) To abandon or forsake. An artificial contraction of abandon, used by Spenser and other Elizabethan affecters of archaism, probably in imitation of pairs like open/ope. Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, 1590: "And Vortiger enforst the kingdome to aband."

BARBE
(c) A respectful title given by the Vaudois to their teachers. The Swiss French, Italian and Romansch versions mean "uncle", literally "bearded one".

BOUCHET
(c) A pear. Supposed to be an application of the French bouchet, a drink composed of sugar, cinnamon and water.

BROOL
(c) A low, deep humming sound. A murmur. Also brooling. Apparently an adaptation of the Teutonic, eg Dutch brullen, to roar (as a lion). Carlyle, *The French Revolution*, 1837: "Like to the brool of the royal forest-voice."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE
1, Rxh7! Kxh7; 2, Bxg6+ Kg8; 3. Qh2 and mate follows.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Nannies for the Nineties

Norland Nannies
Channel 4, 8.00pm

The Norland organisation was set up as an enlightened riposte to repressive Victorian ideas about bringing up children. Its nannies were taught to value children, respect their individuality and boost their self-esteem. A century on, Norland's ideas have changed little, and nor have the nannies' uniforms. Cries of Mary Poppins will echo through this six-part series which follows a group of teenage girls through Norland's rigorous training course. Some survive better than others. Put in charge of little Alex while his Mum is away working, Rachel Page is convinced she has found her vocation. But Shanta Gilliot is already dischanted with the whole nanny idea and thinks that parents should be at home with their children, especially, as in the case of one of her charges, during a child's birthday.

Vets in Practice
BBC1, 8.00pm

That we are in the third series about the young vets we first met as nervous students testifies to an apparently insatiable appetite for programmes about sick animals. It cannot be coincidence that *Vets in Practice* has taken over the slot recently occupied by Rolf Harris and his chums at *Animal Hospital* and if *Vets in Practice* lacks a Harris figure to front it, its caseloads are no less varied. For Fiona Green, the small animal vet in Reading, surgery is enlivened by the arrival of her first hare (hind leg caught in a garage door) and a woodpecker which has had a nasty encounter with a cat. Steve Leonard in Lancaster has to deal with three orphaned hedgehogs suffering from diarrhoea while his brother Keith is trying to get a collapsed dairy cow back on its feet. As usual the vets' personal stories are mixed with their professional ones.

Family Confidential
Channel 5, 8.30pm

Not many young men in Britain can be studying for their GCSEs and looking after their new baby but trust *Family Confidential*, a series not afraid to be anything but confidential, to find one. He is Mick Jones, 14, father of Jamie, ten months, named after Jamie Lee Curtis. Mick, Jamie and Helen, the 17-year-old mother, are living, uneasily, with Mick's mother Liz. She was furious when she heard about the child but has mellowed. Helen enjoys a less than harmonious relationship with her mother, whom she accuses of abandoning her. As Jamie's christening looms, the prospects for a lasting relationship between Mick and Helen seem no better than 50-50. Mick prefers to go off with his mates rather than change nappies, leaving Helen to accuse him of shirking his fatherly duties.

Mick Jones and the mother of his baby in Family Confidential (Channel 5, 8.30pm)

Fat Files: A Horizon Trilogy
BBC2, 9.30pm

It is no fun being overweight and not being able to do anything about it and this round-up of the latest remedies offers little comfort. Some sufferers have found solace in the *Internet*, not because it offers magical solutions but as a way of lightening the misery by sharing it with others. But shedding the pounds is another matter. Diets are mostly useless and stomach stapling, though sometimes effective, is brutal. Drugs are the other main hope but there are terrible stories of side-effects. The programme features a woman from Oregon who is dying from a lung disease caused by diet pills she took for only five weeks. Meanwhile, the food industry is working on a new type of "fat", made entirely from fibre and special supplements. The idea is to make more nutrients and less fat. **Peter Waymark**

RADIO CHOICE

Comedy Showcase: Relax!
Radio 2, 9.30pm

The brave new world in which BBC television and radio increasingly resemble an homogenous mass has given birth to this seven-part series of new comedies. In the words of the blurb, . . . "any or all of these shows may go on to become a series on radio or television in their own right". So these are seven pilots and to judge by past experience at least one of them will become a radio series, perhaps ahead of a transfer to television in the manner of *Goodness Gracious Me*. Tonight's opener stars Pauline Quirke as Lady Trumpington, new owner of an upmarket health farm, who checks in as an ordinary guest to test the mettle of the staff. The writer is Terry Kyan, best known for *The Brittas Empire*.

Evening Concert
Classic FM, 9.00pm

Radio 3 is presently advertising itself on BBC television using the pay-off line "not just a pile of CDs". One wonders to which rival radio station this remark might apply. While we ruminate as to the answer to that little poser, let me recommend this programme as evidence that being a radio station with a pile of CDs is not necessarily a bad thing. Tonight Nicholas Tresilian's show celebrates Joaquín Turina, on the 50th anniversary of his death. Turina was among the most nationalistic (in the musical sense) of Spanish composers so he did much to acquaint us with the fiery rhythms and evocative orchestrations that give Spanish music such an uplighting crackle. **Peter Barnard**

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00pm Kevin Greening 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 6.00 Dave Pearce 8.00 The Evening Session 10.00 Trade Update 10.10 John Peel 12.00am Andy Kershaw 2.00 Clive Warren 4.00 Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00pm Jimmy Young 2.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 David Allan 8.00 Paul Jones 9.00 Barry Took's Comedy Classics: The Navy Lark, Starring Jon Pertwee, Leslie Phillips and Ronnie Barker (4/6) 9.30 Comedy Showcase: Relax!. New radio comedy. See Choice (1/6) 10.00 Girls and Guitars: Sarah McLachlan (6/6) 10.30 Richard Allinson 12.00am Katrina Leskanich 3.00 Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00pm The Midday News, Presented by Annie Webster 1.00 Ruscoe and Co 4.00 Drive 7.00 News Extra with David McNeil 7.30 Hardest Game. Harry Carpenter remembers Muhammad Ali 8.00 Inside Edge. Rob Bonnet looks at the issues behind the sporting headlines 9.00 Hoops 9.30 Sportshop 10.00 Late Night Live. Presented by Brian Hayes 1.00am Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans 9.30 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Harriet Scott 6.45 Mark Forrest 10.00 Richard Allen 1.00am James Merritt 4.30 Jeremy Clark

TALK RADIO

6.00am Big Boys Breakfast 9.00 Scott Chisholm 1.00pm Anna Raeburn 3.00 Peter Deeley's Drivetime 5.00 The Sports Zone 8.00 James Whale 1.00am Ian Collins

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today 7.00 World News 7.15 Outlook 7.55 My Century 8.00 World News 8.05 From Our Own Correspondent 8.20 Off the Shelf: Silas Marner 8.35 The Works 9.00 World News 9.05 Network 9.20 Andy Kershaw's World of Music 9.50 Sports Round-Up 10.00 Newsdesk 10.30 Britain Today 10.45 Performance 11.00 Newsdesk 11.30 Assignment 12.00pm World News 12.05 Outlook 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 Newshour 2.00 World News 2.05 The Works 2.30 Meridian Books 3.00 World News 3.05 Sports Round-Up 3.15 Westway 3.30 The Greenfield Collection 4.00 World News 4.15 Insight 4.30 Planet 2000 5.00 Europe Today 5.30 World Business Report 5.45 Sports Round-Up 6.00 World News 6.15 Britain Today 6.30 Assignment 7.00 World News 7.05 The Works 7.30 From Our Own Correspondent 7.45 Off the Shelf: Silas Marner 8.00 Newshour 9.00 World News 9.05 World Business Report 9.20 Britain Today 9.30 Meridian Books 10.00 World News 10.15 Sports Round-Up 10.30 Planet 2000 11.00 World News 11.05 Outlook 11.45 Insight 12.00am The World Today 12.30 The Works 12.55 My Century 1.00 The World Today 1.30 Westway 1.45 Performance 2.00 The World Today 2.30 Focus on Faith 3.00 The World Today 3.20 Sports Round-Up 3.30 World Business Report 3.45 Insight 4.00 The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day 8.00 Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour. *Plus, favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300* 12.00pm Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones presents favourite music 2.00 Concerto. Haydn (Concerto in E flat major for two horns 3.00 Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance 6.30 Newsnight. The latest headlines and sport updates 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds 9.00 Evening Concert. Turina (La Procesion del Rocio); Albeniz (Navarra); Turina (Danzas Fantasticas); Granados (Goyescas); Rodrigo (Concierto de Aranjuez); Turina (Guitar Sonata) 11.00 Mann at Night. A chance to wind down with the sound of ambient music 2.00am Concerto (r) 3.00 Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

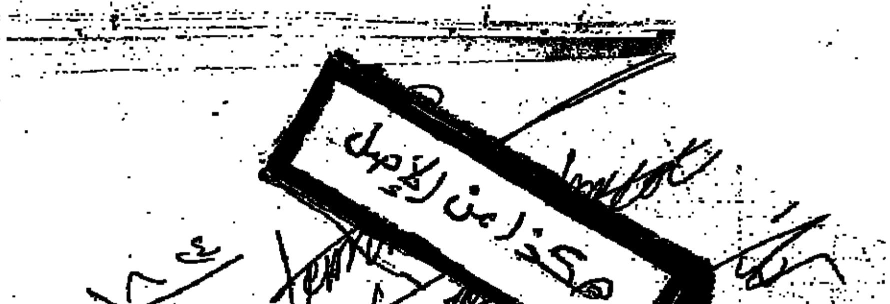
6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny. Handel (Organ Concerto in F, Op 4 No 4); Britten (Simple Symphony); Beethoven (Egmont Overture)
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Brade (Allmand (Witches' Dance); Haydn (Piano Trio in E, H XV 28); Mahler (Symphony No 5, 4th mvt); Brahms (Begrabnisgesang); Michael Haydn (Quintet in C, Op 88); Falla (El Amor Brujo)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Emanuel Ax
11.00 Sound Stories: Feuds Corner Richard Baker investigates the rivalry felt by Brahms and Wagner
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Rimsky-Korsakov
1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Brodsky Quartet. Haydn (String Quartets: in C, Op 54 No 2; in B flat, Op 76 No 4, Sunrise)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Jerzy Maksymiuk and Osmo Vanska, Elisabeth Batiashvili, violin
4.00 Ensemble with Penny Gore (r)
4.45 Music Machine with Tommy Pearson
5.00 In Tune On the publication of a new biography, Sean Rafferty discusses the music of Strauss
7.30 Performance on 3 Live from the Colston Hall, Bristol, introduced by Chris Wines. Alexei Lubimov, piano, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Herbert Blomstedt. Mendelssohn (Overture: The Hebrides, Fingal's Cave); Schubert (Symphony No 2 in B flat) 8.15 Book of the Month 8.35 Concert, part two. Brahms (Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor)
9.35 Postscript: The Red Flag and the Red Mask
10.00 Music Restored Includes Dowland partsongs from Red Byrd and a Biber violin sonata performed by the Russian ensemble Musica Petropolitana
10.45 Night Waves Paul Allen explores the increasingly complex ways we think about the human body in art and science
11.30 Jazz Notes Alyn Shipton reviews some new CDs with Campbell Burnap
12.00am Composer of the Week: Poulenc (r)
1.00 Through the Night with Donald Macleod. 1.00 Prague RSO under Leos Svarovsky, Martin Kasik, piano. Mozart (Overture: The Marriage of Figaro); Chopin (Piano Concerto No 2 in F minor); Shostakovich (Symphony No 15) 2.20 Beethoven (Piano Sonata in C minor, Op 111) 3.00 Schools: Alphabet Time 3.10 Music Workshop 3.30 Let's Move 3.50 Words Alive! 4.05 First Steps in Drama 4.20 Listen and Write 4.40 Standard Grade English 5.00 Kajanus (Rhapsody No 1) 5.35 Abel (Sonata No 5 in F)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Charlotte Smith
6.00 Today with John Humphrys and James Naughtie
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament Round-up of political developments
9.00 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg
9.30 Transplantations A little patch of the Caribbean in North London (1/5) (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Doctor, the Detective and Arthur Conan Doyle Michael Williams reads part four of Martin Booth's biography (r)
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 From Our Own Correspondent Reports from BBC correspondents worldwide
11.30 Old Dog and the Partridge Nicola is on the verge of romance — and Andy is on the verge of being found out. With Michael Williams and Lise Coleman (3/6)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00pm (FM) News 12.04 You and Yours Consumer news and investigations
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Hidden Treasures Lars Tharp presents the antiques quiz from Dyrham Park near Bath. With Penny Brittain and David Battie
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Dogs Sheila Goff's black comedy set in a Pinner pet emporium. Starring Tina Gray and Shirley Dixon
3.00 Call You and Yours 0870 010 0444 Peter White presents the consumer justice programme
3.30 Tales from the Village Joel Kibazo meets the traditional African musicians who still play a pivotal part in village life (4/5) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates the history of Britain, drawing on the words of Winston Churchill. Read by Paul Eddington (r)
4.00 Word of Mouth Michael Rosen explores the language of ideological persuasion (4/4)
4.30 The Material World Trevor Philips explores the phenomenon of organic gardening
5.00 PM Presented by Clare English and Eddie Mair
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The Worriers Comedy starring Toby Longworth and Niall Ashdown. In the final episode they fret about going on holiday (6/6)
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Francine Stock examines the French composer Olivier Messiaen's success at turning birdsong into music
7.45 Lady Susan Lavinia Murray's adaptation of Jane Austen's story. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (r)
8.00 Case History Professor Roy Porter considers Anthony Eden's performance during the Suez Crisis (r)
8.30 The Week in Westminster Peter Riddell of *The Times* looks behind the scenes at Westminster
9.00 Testbeds Vanessa Collingridge explores how technology will shape the future
9.30 In Our Time with Melvyn Bragg (r)
10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana Part nine
11.00 Late Night on 4: World of Pub The pub is threatened with closure, and it'll take a miracle to keep it open. With John Thomson, Phil Cornwell and Alistair McGowan (2/4)
11.30 (FM) Experimental Feature: The Hand of Friendship Gerry Anderson presents the top 10 political handshakes of recent times
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament
12.00am News 12.30 The Late Book: Last Resort Kate Harper reads part four of Alison Lurie's tale
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.



No sign as yet of coppers bottoming out

REVIEW

Joe Joseph

Sooner or later, those of you who think crime is something that *happens* only to someone else are going to have to join the *rest of us in* staying home at nights behind locked doors, watching *the television*, and facing up to the fact that — like it or not — there's a war being waged out there in the world of crime: it's being *fought* between the drama and documentary departments of *television companies*, who are circling each other warily, wondering *where the other will* strike next. Barely have we finished watching *The Cops*, a taut fiction that was determined to tell us what really goes on in the police force, then along comes the magnetically watchable *Mersey Blues* (BBC2), a fly-on-the-wall series that's determined to give us the *real* truth, revealing aspects of modern police life that *scriptwriters* would find too implausible to invent.

It's *becoming* like a televisual spot-the-difference competition as viewers are challenged to distinguish drama from documentary, fiction from fact. It's tricky to know where producers will go from here. Maybe *Bill and Bent*, a new drama series that will lift the lid on the modern police life to show us that the policemen we always thought were so helpful are actually pouring LSD into the water supply so that we'll be too distracted to notice them pocketing bribes from the the underworld's Mr Bigs. And the rival response? *Bobby Blues*, a new docusoap that unmasks policemen who steal walking sticks from old ladies and frame children for drug deals.

Then what? *Police Practice*, another new drama that utterly shocks the nation by portraying the police force as riddled with — yes! — honest men and women who never take bribes, don't pocket drugs found during raids and help children across the road.

Jenny Crowther — the producer and director of *Mersey Blues* — spent four years hanging around the Merseyside force, becoming as familiar to her subjects as their dusty files on still unsolved crimes. Her patience has paid off in footage that has all the ingredients of a tense drama.

Will the co-ordinated raids across Liverpool of suspected drug dealers net anything? Will the overworked officers agree to work more unpaid overtime after hearing of the latest budget cuts? Will they all get a morale boost by catching the drug-runner they've been told is heading for Liverpool? What if the tip-off is wrong and he isn't carrying drugs after all?

And perhaps most mysteriously of all, why do police always use such daft codenames as "Sinbad" and "Operation Yokel", alerting all drug-dealers listening into police radio frequencies that something's afoot ("Hey guys, they've started that Sinbad, Yokel, Albatross, Bumblebee business on their police radios again. They must be about to launch a raid or something.") Why don't the police use less awkward, more everyday words, such as "toast" or "Lemsip", words less likely to betray themselves as codewords to eavesdropping criminals? You could call Crowther lucky for bagging the most dramatic twist she could have hoped for — the arrest, during her stay, of a senior Merseyside detective on corruption charges. But you suspect that it was probably one of those cases where the harder Crowther worked, the luckier she got. The detective is accused of working for Europe's most dangerous drugs baron. But which, if any, of the detectives in last night's opening episode will turn out to be the bent copper? Crowther, smartly but infuriatingly, is leaving us guessing for the time being. Television drama departments will have their work cut out trumping this.

Not very far away, in Cheshire, a vicar has found a cut-price way to exact justice which the cash-strapped Merseyside Police could learn from. In **Garages from Hell** (ITV), we saw the vicar turn up one night, with his church choir, on the doorstep of the dodgy mechanic who'd botched his car repair. I was expecting *him to sing his victim* into submission, although he decided to move in a *more mysterious* way by *not* singing. But menacing singing is an approach worth considering by all Britain's budget-conscious police teams. Imagine what crimes you wouldn't confess to if Des O'Connor or Engelbert Humperdinck pitched up on your doorstep and refused to stop crooning until you'd come clean.

Blood On the Carpet (BBC2) was a sort of *Corporate Takeovers From Hell*, a new series seeking to expose the drama behind the business battles that seem so dry to outsiders who cannot recognise the passion that swells like a tide behind the shorthand of share prices and price/earnings ratios. The series got off briskly with the emotional tale of how Rocco Forte lost control of the £4 billion hotel and catering empire his Italian father had built *from a milk bar when Trusthouse* Forte fell to a hostile takeover by Gerry Robinson and Charles Allen — a pair of shrewd businessmen who'd already given Granada a taste of their financial electric-shock treatment and now felt they were being treated high-handedly by Rocco.

As the players in the drama re-enacted their roles in the battle, you wondered just how many major financial decisions are triggered by acts of revenge against perceived slights. Here, we had what: Macbeth versus Macduff? Or was it Caesar against Brutus and Cassius? Or Olivier and Michael Caine trying to outwit each other in *Sleuth*? The film ended with Rocco rebuilding a hotel empire, determined to prove to those THF shareholders who had abandoned him that if only they'd given him a chance he'd have shown that, like Brando, he really could have been a contender.

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (71068)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (69375)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (8676337)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (5049207)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (7908801)
11.00 Real Rooms (7925578)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7995337)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1111733)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (21066)
12.30 Battersea Dogs' Home (89578)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (62462)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (86609337)
1.40 Neighbours Joel makes a move on Sally (T) (65389153)
2.05 Ironside The Chief tackles a spate of credit-card thefts (r) (7672627)
2.55 Going for a Song (8567882)
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2998733)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (4227022) **3.45** The All New Popeye Show (9074085) **3.55** Pocket Dragon Adventures (9070269) **4.05** Rugrats (6937356) **4.20** Home Farm Twins (6958849) **4.35** Short Change (1631269) **5.00** Newsround (5478998) **5.10** *See How They Run* (6501153)
5.33 Rewind (T) (849153)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (282578)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (511)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (191)
7.00 Watchdog with Anne Robinson Wedding reports championing the cause of wronged couples (T) (1288)
7.30 EastEnders Bianca has a surprise for Frank (T) (375)
8.00 CHOICE **Vets in Practice** Fiona Green treats an injured woodpecker, while Steve Leonard prepares a litter of orphan hedgehogs for release into the wild (T) (7608)
8.30 Fat Free A dedicated slimmer prepares for a drastic method of shedding the pounds (2/6) (T) (9443)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7207)

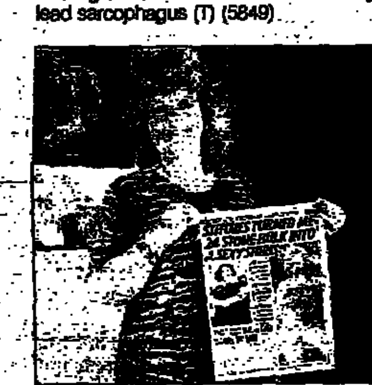


Geoffrey Rush stars as the disturbed pianist David Helfgott (9.30pm)

9.30 Shine (1996) Premiere. A talented young pianist cracks under the pressure of his father's obsession with *success*, leading to years of psychological torment. Drama based on the life of the prodigy David Helfgott, starring Geoffrey Rush, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Noah Taylor and John Gielgud. Directed by Scott Hicks (T) (831443)
11.15 Question Time (765240)
12.15am Faces of Islam The film producer Ismail Merchant discusses his faith. Last in series (T) (6670196)
12.35 Man on Fire (1987) *Bodyguard Scott* Glenn goes on a gun-toting rampage to rescue the kidnapped 12-year-old he's been hired to protect. With Joe Pesci. Directed by Elie Chouraqui (1402496)
2.00 Weather (9535486)
2.05 BBC News 24 (74382592)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: *Open a Door* (2297135) **7.05** Teletubbies (2934172) **7.30** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (3813004) **7.55** *Blue Peter* (2213065) **8.15** Taz-Mania (5643917) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (8146207) **8.50** Fiddley Foodle Bird (8135191) **9.00** Job Bank (7062462) **9.10** Belief File (6488627) **9.30** Watch (8251559) **9.45** Come Outside (8249714) **10.00** Teletubbies (23085) **10.30** *Storytime* (5815998) **10.45** *The* Experimenter (3113733) **11.05** Space Ark (9686443) **11.15** Zig Zag (1465917) **11.35** Lifeschool (5602627) **12.00pm** Job Bank (9383578) **12.10** English File (4974269) **12.30** Working Lunch (70820) **1.00** Fiddley Foodle Bird (73670882)
1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour (2485424)
2.10 Sporting Greats Allan Wells (22116820)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (8959085)
2.45 Westminster (T) (2574694)
3.25 News; Weather (T) (2995646)
3.30 Hot Shots Techniques used to film *sharks* (r) (T) (8436849)
3.40 Song of Norway (1970) Biopic of the famous composer Edvard Grieg. Starring Toraly Maurstad. Directed by Andrew L. Stone (65740337)
6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation (r) (T) (171240)
6.45 The Outer Limits (T) (599917)
7.30 First Sight Investigations into a range of topical issues (T) (917)
8.00 The Travel Show Juliet Morris discovers how holidays in Bali have become more affordable (T) (8578)
8.30 Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines The *Jahre Viking* supertanker and a new 150mph Class One offshore powerboat (r) (T) (7085)
9.00 Meet the Ancestors Julian Richards investigates the contents of a 4th-century lead sarcophagus (T) (5849)



Shirley Rutherford suffered the effects of drastic weight loss (9.30pm)

9.30 CHOICE **Fat Files: A Horizon Trilogy** Drugs which reduce appetite by resetting the brain's control *mechanism* (2/3) (T) (988646)
10.20 Meetings with Remarkable Trees (r) (T) (786563)
10.28 Suspended in Time (T) (393085)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (977714)
11.15 Late Review *Glamorama* by Bret Easton Ellis (249022)
11.55 Skiing Forecast (200004)
12.00am Despatch Box (99757)
12.30 BBC Learning Zone: Open University: A University without Walls **1.00** Lost Worlds **1.30** Making Contact **2.00** Further Education: English for Speakers of Other *Languages* **4.00** *Creative Arts:* Career Moves — Art and Design **5.00** Teacher Training: Central Bureau — Bringing Languages Alive **5.30** Go Higher — Why Go into Higher Education? **5.45** Open University: Women, Children and Work **6.35** Asthma and the Bean

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (43998)
6.00 GMTV (6791462)
9.25 Trisha (T) (3565733)
10.30 This Morning (T) (24132443)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (9359511)
12.30 *ITN Lunchtime News* (T) (74646)
1.00 Shortland Street Tiffany is in a state of *panic* (57530)
1.30 Home and Away Diana's back in town (T) (73917)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (2806917)
2.45 Supermarket Sweep (T) (637608)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (2993288)
3.20 HTV News (T) (2983801)
3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (2973424) **3.35** The Adventures of Dawdle (8422646) **3.45** The Sylvester and Tweety Mysteries (8402882) **4.00** Lavender Castle (6923153) **4.15** *Hey Arnold!* (8336676) **4.40** The Worst Witch (7016559)
5.10 *A Country Practice* *Hugo makes* Christina confront her cancer (9654630)
5.38 HTV Crimestoppers (866820)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News; Weather (T) (806207)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (131646)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight (T) (131284)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (470172)
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (559)
7.00 Emmerdale Kathy turns the tide of the trial (T) (6356)
7.30 WEST: We Can Work It Out A look at the rights of consumers when returning faulty electrical goods (443)
7.30 WALES: Somewhere in Wales: St Fagan's at 50 *Behind the scenes of the* Museum of Welsh Life (r) (443)



Simon Rouse stars as Detective Chief Inspector Meadows (8pm)

8.00 The Bill CID suspect a Turkish café is a front for an illegal gambling ring and raid the premises. With Simon Rouse and Kemal Sylvester (T) (7795)
9.00 The Knock The team bug Greg Taylor's house and learn he is planning to smuggle cocaine into the UK to pay for the next shipment of nuclear material from Russia (2/6) (T) (7559)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (40191)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (283917)
10.40 Thursday Night Live Hard-hitting debate (2/13) (9165004)
12.10am WEST: Jenny Sitcom (5987757)
12.10 WALES: We Can Work It Out Returning faulty electrical goods (5987757)
12.40 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (7753592)
1.25 St Ives (1976) *A destitute crime* reporter-turned-author is caught up in murder when he agrees to recover some stolen ledgers. Mystery thriller, with Charles Bronson. Directed by J. Lee Thompson (722134)
3.00 Box Office America Top 10 US movie releases (12757)
3.30 Cybernet Computer innovations (35757)
4.00 Murder, She Wrote (r) (2757757)
4.50 ITV Nightscreen (6399979)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except: **12.20pm-12.30 Central News;** Weather (T) (6982559) **1.00 Echo Point** (57530) **1.30 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (9904714) **2.15-2.45 Home and Away** (T) (638337) **3.20-3.25 Central News** (T) (2983801) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street** (9654630) **6.25-6.55 Central News;** Weather (T) (116337) **6.55-7.00 Lifeline** (T) (249424) **10.30-10.40 Central News;** Weather (T) (283917) **12.10am-12.45 Public Morals** (5629592) **1.30 *Pirate TV*** (7951973) ***1.55 Real Stories of the Highway Patrol*** (5638979) **2.15 *ITV at the Belfort Festival*** (9902757) **3.10 Cybernet** (34976889) **3.40 Potty About Pets** (14203405) **4.05 Central Jobfinder '99** (T) (8918370) **5.20-5.30 Asian Eye** (4219825)

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.27 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (9359511) ***12.27-12.30 Illuminations*** (6990578) **1.00 Emmerdale** (r) (T) (57530) **1.30 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (9904714) **2.15-2.45 Home and Away** (T) (638337) **3.20-3.25 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (2983801) **5.08 Birthday People** (8597608) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away** (T) (9654630) **6.00-7.00 Westcountry *Live*** (T) (59337) **10.30-10.40 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (283917) ***12.10am-12.40 Public Morals*** (5987757)

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (9359511) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away** (T) (9654630) **6.00 Meridian Tonight** (T) (207) **6.30-7.00 Getaways** (559) **10.30-10.40 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (283917) ***5.00am-5.30 Freescreen*** (T) (91776)

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (6961066) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (6982559) **1.00-1.35 Upshot!** (r) (1229882) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street** (9654630) **6.23 Anglia Weather** (471801) **6.25-7.00 Anglia News** (T) (131284) **10.29 Anglia Air Watch** (380511) **10.30-10.40 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (283917) **12.10am-12.40 Tales from the Crypt** (5987757)

Starts: ***5.55am Sesame Street*** (r) (45936608) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (47999462) **9.00 Schools** (16567608) **9.00 Medieval Realms** (16567608) **9.30 Geographical Eye** (89503882) **9.40 English Programme** (80678269) **10.00 Middle English** (98274066) **10.20 Fourways Farm** (71779849) **10.30 Scientific Eye** (17253801) ***10.50 What the Papers Said*** (93943269) **11.00 The Number Crew** (53671714) **11.10 Top!** (35594608) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (24855917) **12.00pm Bewitched** (T) (16570172) **12.30 Sesame Street** (38572646) **1.00 Planed Plant; Caffi** Sali Mali (54336820) **1.15 Wil Cwac Cwac** (T) (54331375) **1.30 Roots to Success** (T) (69850849) **1.45 Macbeth** (T) (34261288) **3.30 *Hampton Court Palace*** (T) (56252153) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (56271288) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (56260172) **5.00 Planed Plant** (96939202) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56251424) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (69130714) **6.10 Heno** (T) (95832511) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (37543518) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (56261801) ***8.00 Penblwydd Hapus*** (T) (90539266) **8.30 Pam Fi Duw?** (T) (15389563) **9.00 I dot** (70227266) **10.00 Father Ted** (r) (T) (16571801) **10.30 Friends** (r) (T) (81813240) **11.05 King of the Hill** (T) (86763199) **11.35 Whose Line Is It Anyway?** (T) (69744578) **12.05am Bob and Margaret** (T) (57108399) ***12.35 Dispatches*** (T) (66724554) ***1.05 Fidel*** (T) (80958196) **2.35 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.40am Pink Panther (7914424)
5.50 Animal Alphabet (7852608)
5.55 Sesame Street (r) (4781820)
7.00 The *Big Breakfast* (52085)
9.00 Schools: History in Action (6477511) *9.20 Geographical Eye Over Britain 1* (6497375) **9.40** The English Programme (7293462) **10.00** Middle English (6265443) **10.20** Fourways Farm (4792375) **10.30** Scientific Eye (3125578) **10.50** What the Papers Said (2620511) **11.00** Number Crew (9672240) **11.10** *Channel Hopping Auf Deutsch* (1451714)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (1882)
12.00pm Sesame Street (T) (47004)
12.30 Bewitched (T) (72288)
1.00 Pet Rescue (r) (T) (55172)
1.30 The Ocean World of John Stoneman (T) (65316207)
1.55 Way of a Gaucho (1952) Western set in Argentina, starring Rory Calhoun as a rebel leader campaigning against the construction of a railroad. Directed by Jacques Tourneur (T) (61538288)
3.30 Hampton Court Palace (T) (337)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (172)
4.30 Countdown (T) (1625608)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (4736066)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (608)
6.00 Dishes Dating show (T) (849)
6.30 Hollyoaks Kate makes an error of judgment (T) (801)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (737240)
7.50 Gilbert and Sullivan: The Very Models (T) (399288)



Some of the hopefuls at the Norland School of nannying (8pm)

8.00 CHOICE **Norland Nannies** New series. Cameras follow a group of girls at the Norland School (T) (3646)
8.30 Secret Lives Profile of Princess Margaret (r) (T) (29375)
9.30 Dispatches Report on victims of medical *negligence* (T) (52424)
10.00 Rising Damp Rigsby gets romantic tips from Alan (T) (461443)
10.35 Whose Line Is It Anyway? Improvisational comedy show, hosted by Clive Anderson (r) (T) (211559)
11.05 Ally McBeal Fish asks Ally to date a prospective client (T) (860085)
12.05am 4 Later Introduction; Oz (5756047)
1.10 Vidz Offbeat video review (6438824)
1.40 A Feather Tale Short film about a woman's sex life (8199347)
1.50 Stan and George's New Life (1991) A *pair of middle-aged weather forecasters* fall in love amid a turbulent time in the office. Comedy, starring Paul Chubb. Directed by Brian McKenzie (339573)
3.45 Holiday on the River Yarra (1990) A pair of unemployed teenagers seek excitement and become embroiled in a racist plot to overthrow the rulers of a small African island. With Craig Adams. Directed by Leo Berkeley (944486)
5.15 Right to Reply (r) (T) (24573)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport Headline *round-up* (7804917)
7.00 WideWorld Part five. The dangers facing *semi-aquatic wildlife species* (r) (T) (9992820)
7.30 Milkshake! (8954563)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (9623733)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1063424)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (r) (1062795)
9.00 Animal House (r) (T) (2676207)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (4698462)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6422269)
10.20 Sunset Beach Cole realises he's been set up (T) (2020917)
11.10 Leeza (r) (2900443)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (1066511)
12.30 Family Affairs Annie confesses her true feelings (r) (T); 5 News Update (9832240)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Bridget's plan upsets Brooke (T) (9991191)
1.30 The Roseanne Show *A chat with Barry* Humphries (r); 5 News Update (9831511)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6252511)
2.30 Good Afternoon An hour of entertainment (4451375)
3.30 Greased Lightning (1977) Richard Pryor stars as a Virginian moonshiner whose driving skills propel him to fame in the world of stock car racing. Adventure, with Beau Bridges. *Directed by Michael* Schultz (9535066)
5.20 Sunset Beach *Shown earlier* (r) (T); 5 News Update (6084795)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (5113820)
6.30 Family Affairs Jamie takes a blood test (T) (5104172)
7.00 5 News Round-up of the day's stories (T) (6263627)
7.30 Champions of the Wild Report on recent efforts to conserve the sea turtle (T); 5 News Update (5100356)
8.00 The Pepsi Chart Live performances by Ultra, Another Level and Blockster (6272375)
8.30 CHOICE **Family Confidential** New series of *fly-on-the-wall* documentaries looking at ordinary people in unusual circumstances, beginning with 14-year-old schoolboy father Mick Jones, who shares a three-bedroom Banbury flat with his mother, girlfriend and baby, and divides his time between *in-line* skating, GCSE studies and nappy-changing (6251882)
9.00 A Strange Affair (TVM 1995) A woman falls for a stranger while nursing her husband back to health following a stroke — but when the two men become friends, a strange threesome develops. Drama, starring Judith Light, Jay Thomas and Linda Sorensen. Directed by Ted Kotcheff (T); *5 News Update* (12210608)
10.50 Sex and Shopping Porn stars explain *why they often don't use condoms during* sex scenes (11/13) (3301240)
11.20 The Jack Docherty Show Chat and music (8876085)
12.00am Live and Dangerous Football action, featuring Ajax v Feyenoord in Holland (50019283)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H The women take the law into their own hands to punish *Margo* (3929592)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (8954347)

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PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE
7.00am Count Duckula (89153) 7.30 Chris Evans (22882) 8.30 Hollywood Squares (92578) 9.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (79337) 10.00 Oprah Winfrey (97172) 11.00 Guilty! (84608) 12.00pm Jenny Jones (29135) 1.00 Mad About You (88424) 1.30 *Jeopardy* (20849) *2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael* (75462) 3.00 Jenny Jones (47563) 4.00 Guilty! (27288) 5.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (2559) 6.00 Married — With Children (9191) 6.30 Dream Team (7153) 7.00 The Simpsons (3288) 7.30 The Simpsons (6627) 8.00 America's Dumbest Criminals (9608) 8.30 World's Weirdest TV (1443) 9.00 Friends (15172) 9.30 ER (77801) 10.30 Veronica's Closet (73443) 11.00 Dream Team (28917) 11.30 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (74004) 12.30am Highlander (32196) 1.30 Long Play (5982592)

SKY BOX OFFICE
Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 28)
Crash (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)
GI Jane (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59)
Buddy (1997)
Starship Troopers (1997)
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)
One Night Stand (1997)

FILMFOUR
6.00pm His Girl Friday (1940) (7248511) 8.00 The Hudsucker Proxy (1994) (7250356) 10.00 Barton Fink (1991) (9886259) 12.00am Miller's Crossing (1990) (9835216) 2.00 Blood Simple (1983) (2197757) 3.40 The Story of Qiu Ju (1992) (90018457) 6.00 Close

SKY PREMIER
6.00am The Directors: Herbert Ross (49855) 7.00 Femmes Fatales (84820) 8.00 The Long Walk Home (1989) (64356) 10.00 Hello Again (1987) (90608) 12.00pm The Directors: Herbert Ross (93795) 1.00 Femmes Fatales (48202) 1.30 The Long Walk Home (1989) (65560801) 3.20 The Fifth Element (1997) (31489627) 5.30 Hello Again (1987) (25207) 7.30 Hollywood Buzz (9337) 8.00 Entertaining Angels (1997) (49998) 10.00 The Fifth Element (1997) (74203356) 12.10am Blue Heat (1990) (425318) 1.55 If Lucy Fell (1996) (148318) 3.30 Dead Silence (1996) (458202)

SKY MOVIEMAX
6.00am Movie Magic (41066) 7.00 Gus (1976) (98743) 9.00 Mannequin (1987) (86578) 11.00 The Undercover Kid (1995) (48172) 1.00pm Gus (1976) (57066) 3.00 Damnation Alley (1977) (78820) 5.00 The Undercover Kid (1995) (79627) 7.00 Mannequin (1987) (42917) 8.30 E! (6511) 9.00 Sudden Terror: The Hijacking of School Bus 17 (1997) (40627) 11.00 No Way Back (1995) (576530) 12.35am Dead-Bang (1989) (759738) 2.20 A Self-Made Hero (1996) (776841) 4.00 Movie Magic (8992863)

SKY CINEMA
4.00pm The Outlaw (1943) (8985424) 6.00 Romanoff and Juliet (1961) (7363337) 8.00 My Fair Lady (1964) (23837646) 10.45 American Gigolo (1980) (6757173) 12.45am Blume in Love (1973) (1799516) 2.40 Bad Medicine (1985) (8785931) 4.20 Abandon Ship (1957) (4879955)

TNT
9.00pm Mutiny on the Bounty (1962) (58156789) 12.15am The Outfit (1974) (13715221) 2.15 A Very Private Affair (1962) (88551776) 4.00 Fire and Desire (77339405) 5.00 Close

SKY SPORTS 1
7.00am Sports Centre 7.15 Wrestling 8.15 Sports Centre 8.30 Racing News 9.00 Aerobics 9.30 You're On Sky Sports! 10.00 Rafting 11.00 European Tour Golf Weekly 11.30 Live Golf: Alfred Dunhill Championship 2.30pm Ringside 4.00 World Pool League 5.00 Wrestling 6.00 Sports Centre 6.30 Football League Review 7.30 European Golf: Alfred Dunhill Championship 10.00 Sports Centre 10.15 You're On Sky Sports! 10.45 Trans World Sport 11.45 Sports Centre 12.00am You're On Sky Sports! 12.30 Futbol Mundial 1.00 Spanish Football 3.00 Trans World Sport 4.00 Sports Centre 4.15 Close

SKY SPORTS 2
7.00am Aerobics 7.30 Sports Centre 7.45 Racing News 8.15 Unbelievable Sports 8.45 Sports Centre 9.00 Fish TV 10.00 World Pool League 11.00 Figure Skating 1.00pm FA Cup Special 2.30 Watersports 3.30 Sports Unlimited 4.30 Unbelievable Sports 5.00 Football League Review 6.00 What A Weekend 6.30 The Rugby Club 7.30 Live Ice Hockey 10.00 The Rugby Club 11.00 Tight Lines 12.00am Inside the PGA Tour 12.30 Live US Golf: Sony Open 2.30 The Rugby Club 3.30 Live Cricket

SKY SPORTS 3
12.00pm Wrestling 1.00 Fish TV 2.00 Sky Sports Classics: Gold Cricket 3.00 The Entertainers 3.30 Fastrax 4.00 Badminton 5.00 Survival of the Fittest 6.30 Inside the PGA Tour 7.00 Fishing: Tight Lines 8.00 Spanish Football 10.00 Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook 11.30 Close

EUROSPORT
7.30am Rally 8.00 Snowboarding 9.00 Live Biathlon 10.30 Luge 11.00 Rally 11.30 Biathlon 1.00pm Car on Ice 1.30 Football 3.30 Biathlon 5.00 Snowboarding 6.00 Trial 7.30 Racing Line 8.30 Boxing 9.30 Rally 10.00 Truck Sports 11.00 Racing Line 12.00am Rally 12.30 Close

UK GOLD
7.00am Crossroads 7.30 Neighbours 7.55 EastEnders 8.30 The Bill 9.00 The Bill 9.30 The House of Eliott 10.30 Angels 11.00 Dallas 11.35 Neighbours 12.25pm EastEnders 1.00 Juliet Bravo 2.00 Dallas 2.55 The Bill 3.25 The Bill 3.55 EastEnders 4.30 Angels 5.00 All Creatures Great and Small 6.00 Dynasty 7.00 May to December 7.40 It Ain't Half Hot, Mum 8.20 Yes, Minister 9.00 Fawlty Towers 9.40 Fawlty Towers 10.25 Ivanhoe 11.30 The Bill 12.00am The Bill 12.30 Backup 1.25 FILM: Cameron's Closet (1988) 3.00 Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS
6.00am Within These Walls 7.00 On the Buses 7.30 Doctor in the House 8.00 That's My Boy 8.30 Second Thoughts 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 Emmerdale Farm 10.00 thirtysomething 11.00 Hawaii Five-O 12.00pm Classic Coronation Street 12.30 Emmerdale Farm 1.00 Nearest and Dearest 1.30 Watching 2.00 thirtysomething 3.00 The Love Boat 4.00 The Saint 5.00 Hawaii Five O 6.00 Emmerdale Farm 6.30 Classic Coronation Street 7.00 Mission: Impossible 8.00 The Love Boat 9.00 Classic Coronation Street 9.30 Brian Conley Show 10.00 Jokers Wild 10.30 Hogan's Heroes 12.00am Men and Motors



Nastassja Kinski and Wesley Snipes star in *One Night Stand*, an adult drama from Mike Figgis (Sky Box Office 4)

DISNEY CHANNEL
6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House 6.25 Classic Toons 6.35 Gummi Bears 7.00 Classic Toons 7.10 Aladdin 7.35 101 Dalmatians 8.00 Goof Troop 8.25 Classic Toons 8.45 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 9.00 Spot 9.05 Animal Shelf 9.15 Pocket Dragons 9.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 9.55 The Toothbrush Family 10.00 Bite Size 10.10 Tots TV 10.30 Big Garage 10.45 PB and J Otter 11.00 Sesame Street 12.00pm The Adventures of Spot 12.05 Animal Shelf 12.15 Pocket Dragons 12.30 Bear in the Big Blue House 12.55 The Toothbrush Family 1.00 Bite Size 1.15 Tots TV 1.30 Big Garage 1.45 PB and J Otter 2.00 Quack Pack 2.30 New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh 3.00 The Little Mermaid 3.30 Art Attack 4.00 101 Dalmatians 4.30 Hercules: The TV Show 5.00 Recess 5.15 Pepper Ann 5.30 Smart Guy 6.00 Teen Angel 6.30 Boy Meets World 7.00 Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show 7.50 Classic Toons 8.00 FILM: The Tourist Trap (1997) 9.30 Home Improvement 10.00 Dinosaurs 10.30 The Wonder Years 11.00 Dr Quinn: Medicine Woman 12.00am Close

NICKELODEON
6.00am Muppet Babies 6.30 Rocko's Modern Life 7.00 CatDog 7.30 Rugrats 8.00 The Wild Thornberrys 8.30 Arthur 9.00 Children's BBC 10.00 Wimzie's House 10.30 Babar 11.00 The Magic School Bus 11.30 PB Bear/Budgie the Little Helicopter/Animal Antics/Family Ness 12.00pm Rugrats 12.30 Blue's Clues 1.00 Bananas in Pyjamas 1.30 Little Bear Stories 2.00 Clangers/King Rollo/Wombles/Bod 2.30 Children's BBC 3.00 Children's BBC 3.30 Pippi Longstocking 4.00 Hey Arnold! 4.30 Rugrats 5.00 Sister Sister 5.30 Kenan and Kel 6.00 Sabrina the Teenage Witch 6.30 Driven Crazy 7.00 Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK
6.00am Power Rangers Turbo 6.30 Power Rangers Turbo 7.00 Mortal Kombat 7.25 Oggy and the Cockroaches 7.30 Donkey Kong Country 8.00 Goosebumps 8.25 Sam and Max 8.35 Spiderman 9.00 X-Men 9.25 Fantastic Four 9.50 The Incredible Hulk 10.15 Casper 10.30 Oggy and the Cockroaches 10.55 The Mouse and the Monster 11.05 Eek!Stravaganza 11.30 Life with Louie 11.55 Home to Rent 12.05pm Sam and Max 12.30 Donkey Kong Country 1.00 Mowgli 1.25 Ace Ventura 1.50 Spiderman 2.15 X-Men 2.40 Fantastic Four 3.05 The Incredible Hulk 3.30 Roy and Lisa's Big Ride 3.35 Mortal Kombat 4.00 Spiderman 4.25 Mowgli 4.50 Home to Rent 5.00 Goosebumps 5.25 Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension 5.50 Oggy and the Cockroaches 5.55 Donkey Kong Country 6.25 Sam and Max 6.50 Eek!Stravaganza 7.00 Close

TROUBLE
7.30am City Guys 8.00 Saved By The Bell: The New Class 8.30 Hang Time 9.00 Tempestt 10.00 Hollyoaks 10.30 Echo Point 11.00 Sweet Valley High 11.30 California Dreams 12.00pm The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air 12.30 In the House 1.00 Tempestt 2.00 Hollyoaks 2.30 Echo Point 3.00 Ready or Not 3.30 City Guys 4.00 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air 4.30 In the House 5.00 Saved by the Bell: The New Class 5.30 Sweet Valley High 6.00 Hang Time 6.30 Blast 7.00 USA High

BRAVO
8.00pm The A-Team 9.00 LAPD 9.30 Cops 10.00 Scary Sex 10.30 Erotic Stories 11.00 FILM: Double Agent 73 (1975) 1.00am Sex Bytes 1.30 Scary Sex 2.00 Extreme Championship Wrestling 2.30 Cops 3.00 FILM: Red Scorpion 2 (1994) 5.00 LAPD 5.30 Bushido 6.00 Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY
7.00pm Clueless 7.30 Desmond's 8.00 Roseanne 8.30 News Radio 9.00 Cybill 9.30 Vic Reeves Big Night Out 10.00 Frasier 10.30 Cheers 11.00 Seinfeld 11.30 The Larry Sanders Show 12.00am Late Night with David Letterman 1.00 Taxi 1.30 The Critic 2.00 Dr Katz 2.30 Soap 3.00 Tibs and Fibs 3.30 Nightstand 4.00 Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL
SATELLITE: 6pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY
7.30am Bloomberg Information Television 8.00 Sightings 9.00 Buck Rogers in the 25th Century 10.00 Quantum Leap 11.00 Dark Shadows 11.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 12.00pm The Twilight Zone 12.30 The Twilight Zone 1.00 Tales of the Unexpected 1.30 Tales of the Unexpected 2.00 Amazing Stories 2.30 Mysteries, Magic and Miracles 3.00 Buck Rogers in the 25th Century 4.00 The Incredible Hulk 5.00 Sightings 6.00 Time Trax 7.00 Quantum Leap 8.00 Mercy Point 9.00 Babylon 5 10.00 FILM: Downdraft (1996) 11.55 Sci-Focus 12.00am New Alfred Hitchcock 12.30 The Ray Bradbury Theatre 1.00 FILM: Phantasm (1979) 2.40 Sci-Focus 3.00 The Twilight Zone 3.30 Dark Shadows 4.00 Close

HOME & LEISURE
6.00am Today's Gourmet 6.30 Graham Kerr 7.00 Craftwise 7.30 The Painted House 8.00 Wedding Story 8.30 A Baby Story 9.00 Simply Painting 9.30 Garden Rescue 10.00 Garden Doctors 10.30 Cookabout with Greg and Max 11.00 Two's Country, Get Stuck In 11.30 Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 12.00pm Australia's Strangest Home Improvements 12.30 Doing It Up 1.00 Our House 1.30 Hometime 2.00 Wood Wizard 2.30 Home Again with Bob Vila 3.00 This Old House with Steve and Norm

DISCOVERY
4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures 4.30 Walker's World 5.00 Flightline 5.30 History's Turning Points 6.00 Animal Doctor 6.30 Hunters 7.30 Beyond 2000 8.00 Discover Magazine 9.00 Super Laser 10.00 Skyscraper at Sea 11.00 Forensic Detectives 12.00am Super Structures 1.00 History's Turning Points 1.30 Flightline 2.00 Close

ANIMAL PLANET
12.00pm Horse Tales 12.30 Going Wild 1.00 Nature Watch with Julian Pettifer 1.30 Australia Wild 2.00 Wildlife ER 2.30 Human/Nature 3.30 Harry's Practice 4.00 Jack Hanna's Zoo Life 4.30 Animal Doctor 5.00 Pet Rescue 5.30 Australia Wild 6.00 The New Adventures of Black Beauty 6.30 Lassie 7.00 Rediscovery of the World: Borneo 8.00 Animal Doctor 8.30 Profiles of Nature 9.30 Emergency Vets 10.00 Deadly Australians 10.30 The Big Animal Show 11.00 Wild Rescues 11.30 Emergency Vets 12.00am Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
7.00pm Giants in a Shrinking World 7.30 Ice Climb 8.00 Isle of the Leopard 8.30 The Year of the Bee 9.00 Extreme Earth: Storm Chasers 10.00 On the Edge: Ice Walk 11.00 On the Edge: Filming Through the Arctic Night 12.00am Icebound: Antarctic Wildlife Adventure

HISTORY
4.00pm The World at War: Stalingrad 5.00 Four Years of Thunder 6.00 The Great Empire: The Enduring Legacy 7.00 The Missing Princes of England

CARLTON FOOD
9.00am Food Network Daily 9.30 Food for Thought 10.00 Who's Cooking Dinner? 10.30 Worrall Thompson Cooks 11.00 What's Cooking? 11.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 12.00pm Food Network Daily 12.30 For Better, For Worse 1.00 Food for Thought 1.30 The Green Gourmet 2.00 Tessa Bramley's Country Kitchen 2.30 Food Network Daily 3.00 Retrospectives 3.30 Coxon's Kitchen College 4.00 From the Ground Up 4.30 Caribbean Light

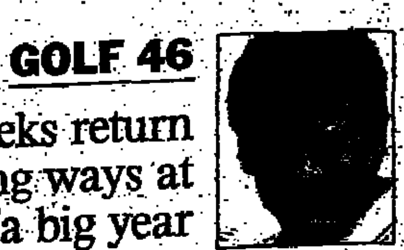
LIVING
6.00am Tiny and Crew 6.20 Philbert the Frog 6.30 Johnson and Friends 6.45 Tiny Tales 6.50 Polka Dot Shorts 7.00 Practical Parenting 7.05 Professor Bubble 7.30 Caillou 7.35 Bug Alert 7.55 Practical Parenting 8.00 Barney and Friends 8.30 Tiny Tales 8.35 Tiny and Crew 8.50 Practical Parenting 9.00 Diet Show 9.30 The Roseanne Show 10.00 The Jerry Springer Show 10.50 Maury Povich 11.40 Brookside 12.10pm Animal Rescue 12.40 Rescue 911 1.10 Special Babies 1.40 Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction 2.10 LA Law 3.10 Living Room 4.00 Michael Cole 4.50 Rolanda 5.40 Ready, Steady, Cook 6.15 The Jerry Springer Show 7.00 Rescue 911 7.35 Animal Rescue 8.00 Murder Call 9.00 FILM: The Secretary (1990) 11.00 Sex Life Down Under 12.00am Close

ZEE TV
6.00am Char Raasta 6.30 Music Time 6.00 Hero Kal Aaj Au 6.30 Awaaz Nayee An 7.00 Faith 7.30 News 8.00 Karobari Duniya 8.30 Sailaab 9.00 Zanjeeran 9.30 Zee Health Show 10.00 Amma Abe Ai 11.00 Pot Luck 11.30 Parampara 12.00pm FILM: Gujarati Movie: Kashuda No Ramzom 3.00 Zee Bangla 3.30 Public Demand 4.00 Campus 4.30 Fairdeal Antakshari 5.30 Darrer 6.00 Top of the Pops 6.30 Hip Hip Hurray 7.00 Gudgudee 7.30 Cinemagic 8.00 News 8.30 Chahat Aur Nafrat 9.00 Himalaya's Hasratain 10.00 Blunt TV 12.00am News 12.30 Zee Business Show 1.00 Zee Bangla 1.30 Raahat 2.00 FILM: Hindi Movie: Aaj Ka Daur 4.30 An Hour With

BOXING 42
Foul-mouthed Tyson continues on his pre-fight offensive

SPORT

GOLF 46
Faldo seeks return to winning ways at start of a big year



THURSDAY JANUARY 14 1999

Former England coach hopes to escape Crystal Palace crisis

Venables demands pay-off

BY MATT DICKINSON

IT ALWAYS seemed unlikely that Crystal Palace could afford a manager of Terry Venables's impressive stature or even more impressive wage demands, and so it has proved. The nightmare for Mark Goldberg, the club's owner, is that he cannot afford to get rid of him either.

It is amid such financial chaos that Venables will sit down with Goldberg later today and attempt to thrash out a pay-off for his £1 million-a-year contract that has lasted little more than six months of its projected five years. The former England coach is believed to want a seven-figure sum to ease his departure.

Where Goldberg will find the money from, though, is anybody's guess, including his bank manager's, because he appears to be struggling to pay even the milkman. His creditors include his lawyers, who are seeking £375,000, and even Palace players, with Attilio Lombardo reported to be on strike until he is paid £100,000. In buying the club for £22.8 million last year, the former computer tycoon clearly failed to do his sums.

Cruyff in loan deal....page 45
Sad end for Yeovil....page 45

Of course, Venables knows all about financial disorder and even if he is attempting to escape a monetary minefield on this occasion, it is another episode that will be turned against him by those who believe that it is silver rather than silverware that inspires him. He may walk away with his bank balance enhanced, but neither his coaching credentials or his credibility have prospered.

His departures from Tottenham Hotspur, the England post and Portsmouth have all been overshadowed by financial controversies and even a ban from being a company director for seven years has not dampened his enthusiasm for entrepreneurial gambles. He has invested heavily in a Spanish golf and leisure resort to rival La Manga and it is to Europe that Venables may look for work next if he stays in coaching. The job opportunities in the FA Carling Premiership are limited at present, although that situation may not last long.



Venables, trying to plot a return to the FA Carling Premiership, has failed to keep Palace in form on the pitch while the club struggles off it

That is all assuming that Venables does depart Palace today, which is far from certain, given Goldberg's precarious financial state. He may ask Venables to remain in the role of consultant while he attempts to clear his debts.

"I am not going to forecast what's going to happen today," Venables said last night. "I am going in there to listen. Mark has got some things to sort out, so it is up to him. I will be taking training as normal."

Goldberg's problems stem back even as far as the original takeover of Palace from Ron Noades, now chairman and manager of Brentford, for a hugely inflated sum. Noades, who still owns the freehold of Selhurst Park and the Goldstone training ground, is understood to be owed £5.5 million.

Like other millionaires before him, Goldberg appears to have allowed ambitions of sporting glory to override all business acumen. Star-struck by Venables, he as good as allowed the former Barcelona and Australia coach to write his own contract, which not only ensured that he was better paid than Alex Ferguson and Arsène Wenger, the managers of Manchester United and Arsenal, but also able to walk out after a year.

Goldberg also rashly recruited dozens of commercial and business staff, many of whom now face losing their jobs, without investing as heavily in a team that now languishes 11 points off the play-off places in the Nationwide League first division.

Players have to be sold, but only Matt Jansen is worth a substantial sum. The forward's loyalties are to Newcastle United, the club that he supported as a boy, but Blackburn Rovers, Arsenal and Manchester United are also interested, although not at the £4.5 million fee that Goldberg has agreed with Newcastle. It is the sale of Jansen, against his wishes, on top of the departure of Paul Warhurst to Bolton Wanderers for £800,000, that has convinced Venables that his job is impossible, but it may now allow him to receive his pay-off.

Ted Buxton and Terry Fenwick are also likely to depart the club, with Steve Coppell, the technical director, stepping into the breach for his third period as Palace coach. What Goldberg will do in the longer term, however, is uncertain. Supporters were already voicing the name of Dave Bassett yesterday after his recent departure from Nottingham Forest, but they are likely to discover that even he is out of Goldberg's price range these days.

Georgi Kinkladze, the former Manchester City midfield player, is preparing to find a new club, in the wake of Ajax's announcement that he no longer figures in their plans.

During his time at Maine Road, Liverpool were believed to be interested in signing the Georgia international, although Everton were the only club to table a formal offer. Kinkladze left City for Ajax for £5 million last summer, and the Nationwide League second division club has first option to buy him back.

West Ham United have bought Scott Minto, the full back, from Benfica for £1 million. The former Chelsea player flew into London yesterday to wrap up the move and will be challenging for a place against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday.

England bid goes on the offensive

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

THERE was always likely to be a war of words. As the leading contenders to stage the World Cup finals in 2006 made their pitches at the Expo 99 football trade fair in Cannes, they — that is England, South Africa and Germany — were jostling under the spotlight, each adamant that theirs was destined to the winning bid.

England went into bat first, Sir Bobby Charlton and Sir Geoff Hurst displaying impressive confidence in the English campaign. "I hear things from Germany and South Africa about why English football makes mistakes and why the World Cup should not come to England," Sir Bobby said, "but the one thing that is consistent is that every time a statement comes out from one of our competitors about the World Cup, they invariably mention England.

"Now why is that? It's because they are afraid of us and they respect the strength of our bid and they know that to win the World Cup themselves, the people they have to beat are the English."

Sir Geoff pointed out that England has the necessary stadiums, security, telecommunications, transport, hotels and experience, through hosting Euro 96, to succeed.

German and South African officials were not best pleased. Danny Jordaan, the South Africa campaign chief executive, responded: "Sir Bobby is entitled to his opinion, but we are not afraid of them." He added that the Football Association's recent scandals would have "consequences" for the England bid if they were proved to have been linked to the World Cup campaign.

Question marks still remain over South Africa's ability to host the tournament, but Jordaan maintained that his country was close already to meeting the stringent requirements laid down by Fifa, the world governing body, whose 24 executive members will choose the successful bid in March next year.

Germany did not make a formal presentation, but Franz Beckenbauer, the former World Cup-winning captain and manager, was on hand to renew claims that England had gone back upon a "gentleman's agreement" to back Germany's claims in return for support before Euro 96.

Warren pays £7.2m to King

BY JOHN GOODBODY

FRANK WARREN, the British boxing promoter, agreed yesterday to pay £7.2 million to Don King to settle their long-running dispute over their former partnership. Despite the acrimony between the men, they shook hands outside the High Court in London, where the settlement was formally agreed.

Warren said afterwards that it was "cheap at the price" to settle the row. He said that he had the money to pay the colourful American promoter, but would be dining tonight on "soup in a basket".

Under the deal, Warren acknowleged his obligation to pay King in recognition of his rights as a partner and withdrew publicly all the allegations that he had made against King and his company, Don King Promotions.

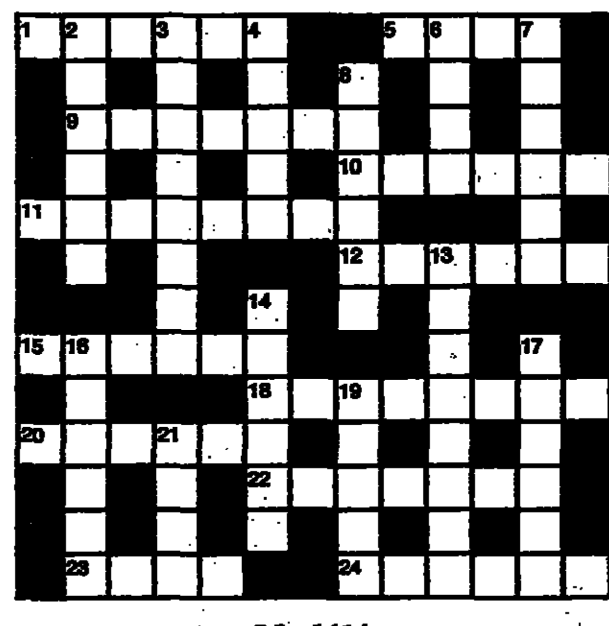
According to King's lawyers, Warren has agreed, if necessary, to sell his luxurious house in Hertfordshire to make the first of a series of agreed payments. This season, Warren has had problems in paying the players of Bedford rugby club, of which he is the owner.



Warren: high price

One of the biggest disputes between the two men was a claim of Don King Productions Inc. that it was entitled to a share of all profits made by Warren during the partnership from British and European boxers, including Naseem Hamed, the World Boxing Association featherweight champion.

Asked if he would still set up contests for Hamed in the United States, King replied: "Naseem is a very good fighter. I will speak to him if he were to ask. The UK guys need a commitment and I will give them that commitment to help those who are less fortunate."



No 1614

ACROSS
1 One owing feudal homage (6)
5 Feeble person; unwelcome plant (4)
9 One of a threesome (7)
10 Excuse; think logically (6)
11 Deprive of movement (8)
12 Soak up (6)
15 Polished, sophisticated (6)
18 Present in quantity (8)
20 Periphery (6)
22 A language; type of bond, horn (7)
23 Rough, impolite (4)
24 Area (of influence); globe (6)

DOWN
2 Of the stars (6)
3 Ceylon republic (3,5)
4 A sweet; money (slang) (5)
6 Napoleon exile island (4)
7 Swallow greedily (6)
8 Run (of luck); run naked (6)
13 Small battle (8)
14 Doghouse (6)
16 Harvest gatherer (6)
17 Writer of books (6)
19 Old sorcerer (5)
21 Prod, provoke (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1613
ACROSS: 1 Chaucer 5 Rich 9 Locum 10 Cranium 11 Man-about-town 12 Demure 13 Island 16 Ping-pong ball 19 Squeeze 20 Undid 21 Tess 22 Ephesus
DOWN: 1 Cult 2 Acclaim 3 Come a cropper 4 Reckon 6 Inigo 7 Hominid 8 Daft as a brush 12 Deposit 14 Alludes 15 Sneeze 17 Nouns 18 Odds

IOC identifies 12 bribery cases

BY JOHN GOODBODY

TWELVE members of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) face expulsion after an inquiry into bribery allegations in the choice of Salt Lake City, Utah, as host of the 2002 Winter Games.

The IOC yesterday said that its six-man commission investigating the scandal had "identified improper behaviour by certain IOC members" and letters have been sent to them demanding explanations.

Anita DeFrantz, an American member of both the IOC and the Salt Lake Organising Committee (SLOC), said that as many as 12 of her fellow IOC members could be ousted. Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, has said that guilty members would be expelled or asked to resign.

The report by the commission is scheduled to be published after a meeting of the IOC's executive board in Lausanne, Switzerland, on January 24. It will recommend changes in both the bidding and IOC election process.

Robert Garff, the SLOC chairman, said that the SLOC ethics panel has identified eight IOC members who could be implicated in the scandal involving cash gifts, scholarships for relatives, a land deal exceeding £40,000, medical operations and sexual favours.

DeFrantz dismissed any possibility that the Games would be moved from Salt Lake City. She said: "The people there have been working very hard. The venues are in place. Things are moving forward. The IOC is very satisfied with the progress in Salt Lake City. The athletes of the world deserve to have it as the site."

However, Marc Hodler, the Swiss IOC member, who last month made the original allegations about corruption in the movement, is concerned that the Mormon city would be unable to raise sufficient money to stage the Games.

He said: "It is impossible for the SLOC to reduce its spending further. If the budget isn't balanced, one could envisage transferring to Calgary or Lake Placid those sports for which installations have not been built in Salt Lake, maybe ski jumping, speedskating, cross-country skiing and the biathlon."

Meanwhile, in Australia, Kevin Gosper, an Australian IOC member, said that the organisation would examine claims by a senior member of Sydney's successful bid for the 2000 Games that he was approached to offer bribes. The claims come from Bruce Baird, a former New South Wales Olympic minister and now a member of the federal parliament.

Jordan pledges not to return

The curtain finally comes down on an astonishing basketball career

Michael Jordan announced his retirement from basketball yesterday, ending one of the most amazing careers in sports history. The National Basketball Association (NBA) superstar, who led the Chicago Bulls to six titles in the past eight seasons, also won ten scoring titles and five Most Valuable Player awards as well as two Olympic gold medals.

Jordan thanked David Stern, the NBA commissioner, Jerry Reinsdorf, the Bulls owner, plus the Chicago fans, who must now learn to get along without him: "The best way to survive without Michael Jordan is to start to live without him," Jordan said.

Jordan vowed he will not return, finding new challenges as a father and businessman to replace those he overcame on the basketball court. He also plans to play more golf and spend more time with his children. "I never say never, but I'm 99.9 per cent sure," Jordan said. "My life is going on to a whole other stage. It's a different challenge and I welcome that. From a career standpoint I have accomplished everything I could. Right now I don't have the mental challenge I have had in the past to proceed as a basketball player."

He added: "It's difficult. You're giving up something you truly love. I don't want to fool myself. To start something and lose motivation in the middle of the season is unfair to who I am working with and unfair to the fans."

Wall Street brokers are quaking after Jordan's retirement. He performed the same role of top scorer for the trainer manufacturer, Nike, that he played at the Bulls. He was Nike's profit engine.

Economists have tried to estimate the value of Jordan's endorsement of such shoes as the Air Jordan. He is said to have generated extra wealth across America topping $10 billion.

Jordan: new challenges

Jordan's retirement came as a complete surprise to shareholders. On Monday, Nike shares had rocketed on the New York stock market after the announcement of the end of the NBA lockout. But yesterday morning the shares plummeted four per cent in the first few minutes of trading.

There is no obvious replacement for Nike and they must be hoping that Jordan becomes bored with retirement and returns to the NBA. He has done so before. He announced his retirement in 1993 to play baseball, but after a year he was back. At the time, Nike shares shot up. Investors knew the biggest cash machine in professional sports was on the court again.